

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1895.

THE BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN.

(BEING THE EXPERIENCES OF A MIDSHIPMAN ON BOARD H.M.S. "MONARCH,"
TOLD BY HIMSELF.)

[THE following narrative was written by my father, William Salter Millard, born June 26th, 1783, being the son of the Rev. Charles Millard, Precentor and Chancellor of Norwich Cathedral and Chaplain to Bishop Horne. It was written about the year 1807, when he seems to have had the intention (never carried out) of publishing an account of some of the incidents of his life; but, from the minuteness of the details given, it is plainly founded on notes made at the time. It makes no pretence to be an exact historical account of the whole action, but is presented as an authentic description of what one midshipman saw and did on board a ship which perhaps suffered more severely than any other in the fleet. The criticisms passed on the Admiral's conduct must, similarly, be taken as merely representing so much of the current gossip in Lord Nelson's division as was likely to reach a midshipman's ears.

I may add that my father left the Navy (not, I venture to say, from any want of aptitude or liking for the service) soon after the Peace of Amiens; and therefore was not present at Trafalgar.

FREDERICK M. MILLARD,
Rector of Otham, near Maidstone.]

IN the afternoon of the 12th of March, 1801, the Admiral made the signal for the fleet to unmoor at midnight. From the moment this was hoisted all was hurry and apparent confusion; the officers were ignorant of the day, or even week, that we were to sail, and had laid in no stock of provisions for the voyage. As a proof of their want of intelligence, the com-

manding officer gave me leave to go on shore but half an hour before the signal; and I had just cleared the ship in time to avoid a recall. I mention this merely to show the secrecy with which the expedition was conducted. The scene upon Yarmouth jetty, this evening, was highly interesting, and in the hand of Hogarth might have made a good companion to the "March to Finchley," but that the importance of the event left no room in the mind for levity or ridicule. Besides the provisions of all sorts which hurried down to the boats, a considerable body of troops, consisting of a battalion of the Forty-Ninth and a detachment from the Ninety-Fifth, or Rifle Corps, were embarking with their baggage and stores. . . . When it is considered that each vessel, of about fifty, stood in need of these preparations, that they were all to be furnished from this pier, and in the space of a very few hours, any one may fairly conclude that the picture need not want life. I never witnessed such a complete buzz. Many officers were, like myself, on shore upon liberty, and were hastening to secure their passage; I do not know that any were left from their own negligence.

The next morning (13th) at daylight, which was about six o'clock, the

squadron got under way per signal, and proceeded out at the St. Nicholas's Gat, leaving a small squadron in the roads under the command of Vice-Admiral Dickson to continue the occasional blockade of the Dutch ports ; that is, to put to sea at the full and change of the moon, look into the Texel, run along the coast to the Island of Walcheren and Helvoetsluys, and then return to take their old station, Yarmouth jetty W.N.W., distance two miles. When the whole fleet had gotten well out, the signal was made to form the order of sailing in three columns ; the frigates, bombs, &c. forming a sort of flying squadron to windward. Even at this time we did not know the place of our destination : the course given out by signal was N.E. by N. this being a due course for the Naze of Norway ; and this was the first assurance we had of being bound towards the Baltic.

At sea we were joined by Rear-Admiral Graves in the *Defiance*, and by Captain Foley in the *Elephant*. We had now an Admiral to each column or division ; weather division, Sir H. Parker, centre, Lord Nelson, and the lee, Rear-Admiral Graves. We passed the Scaw on the 19th : the weather had hitherto been very fine, notwithstanding a heavy swell from the W.N.W. ; but no sooner had we entered that disastrous Cattegat, than the wind came right ahead, and blew so hard on the 20th that any attempt to work so large a fleet against it was in vain. At seven in the evening we anchored per signal, (Anhalt Lighthouse W.S.W. five leagues), and in the course of the night were obliged to strike top-gallant masts and veer away to two cables [distance] in consequence of the heavy sea. On the 22nd, we anchored again off the Koll, struck the lower yards and top-gallant masts, and reefed the courses in the midst

of a storm of hail, snow, and rain, assisted by large pieces of half-frozen ice from the rigging. The Koll, or Kull, is a very high promontory on the Swedish shore, extending to the N.W. with a bold and majestic appearance. The Admiral and Commander-in-Chief sent a flag of truce into Elsinore roads, and we in the meantime prepared for action, and exercised the men in the use of the great guns and small arms. When the weather moderated, we hoisted out the flat-bottomed boat and the launch, and practised them with a carronade and a party of soldiers in each. Several flags of truce passed and repassed between our Commander-in-Chief and the Governor of Cronberg Castle. The Admiral desired to know whether he should pass as a friend or an enemy : the Governor, probably to gain time, pretended to wait for an answer from his court at Copenhagen, a distance of twenty or thirty miles ; but as they had a telegraphic communication, one might suppose a few minutes could have decided the question. When, however, prevarication was of no further use, the Governor sent a very polite message, stating his extreme concern at the orders he had received, which were "to sink the first ship that should presume to pass the Sound." In consequence of this heroic answer the fleet anchored on the evening of the 29th about three miles to the northward of Cronberg Castle. We came to about sunset ; the weather was calm and the air clear ; the sun retiring behind the Castle illuminated all that part of the horizon which was a bright crimson ; the Castle itself, and neighbouring shores, being in shade and opposed to the brightness behind were a fine purple : the picture could not be seen to better advantage. The neck of land upon which the Castle stands is very low for some way, and then

rising suddenly forms a ridge of hills at the back of Elsinore and along the coast to the northward, so that the Castle appears from a distance to stand in the water between the two shores.

Orders were given out that we should pass the Castle the next morning, and the evening was employed in making what farther preparation was deemed necessary. The *Monarch* was honoured with the first place in the line. All hands were in motion early on the morning of the 30th; we got under way about half-past four, and have to for the rest of the fleet; soon afterwards the signal was made to make sail. So alert were the men, that before the answering pendant was hauled down the jib was up, and all filled. We ran along under the three top-sails and foresail, with a pleasant breeze on the starboard quarter. About six, being abreast of the Castle, the Captain ordered the colours to be hoisted; this appears to have been the signal they waited for; before the ensign was half-way to the peak, a shot was fired from the Castle, and with such precision as to drive the water into the lower deck-ports, though it fell short of the ship; this I had from the officer quartered there. We immediately commenced firing, and a tremendous cannonade was kept up till all the fleet were passed. When abreast of the Castle we set top-gallant sails. In the meantime the bombs were throwing shells, having taken up their station for that purpose to the northward of the Castle. After all that has been said of Cronberg Castle, the reader will be somewhat surprised to hear that not one of their shot reached us; such however was the fact. We expected to be saluted from both shores, and were prepared accordingly; but when the succeeding ships found that the batteries on the Swedish side were silent, they hauled over to that shore; and

many of them, finding that the shot fell short, would not condescend to fire at all. We did not, however, entirely escape danger. The Captain of Marines, observing from the poop that none of our shot reached the shore, came down to my quarters in the cabin and took the bed of the gun entirely out, to give a greater elevation, and undertook to fire himself, that he might see the effect. Not being much used to the great guns he kept the lanyard in his hand while the gun was run out, which pulled down the lock before the muzzle was out at the port. The man being priming at the time, the fire communicated with the contents in the powderhorn, and it burst in the man's hand, carrying away the tips of his fingers. One man, being *green*, contrived to have his leg in the way of the tackle when the gun recoiled, by which means the leg was broken.

About ten the fleet anchored in the form of a crescent, with springs on the cables, Copenhagen S.W. about five miles.

Before our passing the Sound Lord Nelson had shifted his flag from the *St. George* to the *Elephant* (74 guns), and a squadron was selected to act under his immediate orders; it consisted of the following two-decked ships:

<i>Elephant</i> (74)	Vice-Admiral Nelson, Captain Foley.
<i>Defiance</i> (74)	Rear-Admiral Graves, Captain Retalick.
<i>Monarch</i> (74)	Captain Mosse.
<i>Ganges</i> (74)	Captain Fremantle.
<i>Bellona</i> (74)	Captain Thompson.
<i>Russell</i> (74)	[Captain Cuming].
<i>Edgar</i> (74)	Captain Murray.
<i>Ardent</i> (64)	Captain Bertie.
<i>Polyphemus</i> (64)	Captain Lawford.
<i>Agamemnon</i> (64)	Captain Fancourt.
<i>Glatton</i> (54)	Captain Bligh. ¹
<i>Isis</i> (50)	Captain Walker.

¹ This was Captain Bligh of the *Bounty*.

To these were added several frigates bomb-vessels, &c. The appearance of the enemy was not a little terrific. A long line, consisting of eighteen ships of all descriptions, several of them line-of-battle ships, was moored on a flat before the town, flanked on their right by a battery upon the Isle of Amak, and on their left by two large batteries on artificial islands mounting eighty-eight pieces of cannon (24-pounders); these are called the Crown Islands, and are very formidable from their strength and situation. Between these and the shore was moored a second line of hulks and men-of-war to protect that approach to the town.

The British fleet continued in its position, gazing on the enemy, till the 1st of April, when Lord Nelson's squadron got under way and ran to the southward, past the Middle Ground. We then anchored, Copenhagen N.W. by W. five or six miles. The enemy had removed all the buoys; and to supply this deficiency soundings were taken by order of the Vice-Admiral, and small vessels placed to serve the purpose. During the evening a few shells were thrown from the Island of Amak, but without any mischievous consequence. One of them fell not very far from the boat in which I was returning from on board the Vice-Admiral with Lieutenant-Colonel Hutchinson of the Forty-Ninth.

Early on the afternoon of this day (April 1st) I observed a light gig pulling towards us, though at a great distance. On directing my spy-glass towards her, I observed several officers in her, but at the end of the boat was a cocked hat put on square, and much lower than others. I immediately ran to the officer of the watch and assured him Lord Nelson was coming on board, "for I had seen his hat." My information did not receive much credit, till in process of time the old checked surtout was dis-

covered; and soon after a squeaking little voice hailed the *Monarch*, and desired us, in the true Norfolk drawl, to prepare to weigh. When I went on board the *Elephant* at night, I found the quarter-deck full of officers, and heard Lord Nelson giving his orders to a party which was going to take soundings along the enemy's line. The last direction his Lordship gave in my hearing was as follows: "Are your oars muffled?" "Yes, my Lord." "Very well; should the Danish guard boat discover you, you must pull like devils, and get out of his way as fast as you can."

On our way to the *Monarch*, Colonel Hutchinson informed me that Lord Nelson intended to attack the enemy in the morning; and that he was himself to storm the Crown Batteries at the head of a division of the Forty-Ninth Regiment, provided the men-of-war could succeed in capturing the shipping, and act with any effect against the batteries previous to the assault. As soon as we came on board, I hastened to communicate the intelligence to the two midshipmen's berths, where it was received with three cheers, and the bearer rewarded with grog he would gladly have refused, being already kept up beyond his usual time, and having to turn out again at midnight to walk the deck till four in the morning. The joy expressed on this occasion was unfeigned, which may be easily believed when it is remembered that we had been in sight of our opponents three days, and knew that sooner or later the bloody day must come.

The next morning the hammocks were piped up at six; but having had the middle watch I indulged myself with another nap, from which I was roused by the drum beating to quarters. I bustled on deck, examined the guns under my directions, saw them provided with handspikes, spare

breechings, tackles, &c. and reported accordingly. About seven the Vice-Admiral made the signal for all Captains, when he delivered to each a card containing a copy of his instructions, his situation in the line, &c. Few as these instructions were, they were amply sufficient, and no general signal was made during the action except No. 16—"to engage the enemy as close as possible;" this the Vice-Admiral kept at his mast-head the whole time.

As soon as reports had been delivered from all parts of the ship that every thing was prepared for action, the men were ordered to breakfast. As the gunners' cabin, where I usually messed, was all cleared away, I went into the starboard cockpit berth, where I found one of the pilots that had been sounding the night before; he told us that they had pulled so near the enemy's ships as to hear the sentinels conversing, but returned without being discovered. Our repast, it may fairly be supposed, under these circumstances, was a slight one. When we left the berth, we had to pass all the dreadful preparations of the surgeons. One table was covered with instruments of all shapes and sizes; another, of more than usual strength, was placed in the middle of the cockpit: as I had never seen this produced before, I could not help asking the use of it, and received for answer "that it was to cut off legs and wings upon." One of the surgeon's men (called Loblolly Boys) was spreading yards and yards of bandages about six inches wide, which he told me was to clap on to my back. My reader will be surprised and perhaps a little shocked at the conversation, or more properly dialogues, which passed between the surgeons' mates and the midshipmen as the latter went on deck to quarters. "D—n you, Doctor," said one, "if you don't handle me

tenderly, I will never forgive you;" to which the mate answered, "By George, sir, you had better keep out of my clutches, or depend on it I will pay you off all old scores." Some such compliments as these were passed with almost every one.

Soon after breakfast the Vice-Admiral made signal to weigh and prepare for battle, anchoring with the sheet-cable out at the stern port. As this manœuvre must be unintelligible to most people without some assistance, I shall briefly explain it. When a ship is anchored in the usual way, the cables are passed through certain holes near the stem or headmost part of the ship; these are called hawse-holes. It follows, therefore, that when a ship is moving with some velocity, and the anchor is let go, the head of the vessel receives a check; but as the impetus is not spent, the stern of the ship, being still at liberty, swings round, and the position of the vessel becomes reversed. This is, I think, too obvious to require further illustration. I must show next the propriety of departing from the usual method in this instance; though this indeed may easily occur to the mind of any one. For if, when you are abreast of your enemy, the ship swing round, she must of necessity present one end or other to them during her evolution; in which period you must submit to a raking fire (which traversing the whole length of the ship is terribly destructive) and not be able to fire a shot in return, till your broadside is brought to bear. But in anchoring by the stern or hindmost part of the ship, the propelling and restricting powers counteract each other, and the ship retains her original position.

The ships nearest the enemy were ordered to lead in and anchor abreast of the southernmost of the enemy's line; the others to follow and pass them in succession, so that our line

became reversed or inverted. The *Monarch* being the last but two or three in the line, we had a good opportunity of seeing the other ships approach the enemy to commence the action. A more beautiful and solemn spectacle I never witnessed. The *Edgar* led the van, and on her approach the battery on the Isle of Amak and three or four of the southernmost vessels opened their fire upon her. A man-of-war under sail is at all times a beautiful object, but at such a time the scene is heightened beyond the powers of description. We saw her pressing on through the enemy's fire, and manœuvring in the midst of it to gain her station; our minds were deeply impressed with awe, and not a word was spoken throughout the ship but by the pilot and helmsmen; and their communications being chanted very much in the same manner as the responses in our cathedral service, and repeated at intervals, added very much to the solemnity. The *Edgar* was followed by the *Isis* and *Russell*, accompanied by the *Desirée* frigate. As our line extended to the northward, more of the enemy's ships opened their fire; and so on down their line till lastly the Crown batteries got to work, and the action became general along the whole line. The bombs, with their tenders (which are small vessels to supply them with ammunition), were ordered to anchor on the outside of the line-of-battle ships to throw shells into the town; and the frigates, under the command of Captain Riou of the *Amazon*, proceeded along our line to the northward to attack the enemy's ships moored between the Crown batteries and the shore. The smaller vessels, such as gun-brigs, luggers, &c., continued under way, to act as occasion might require, and cover the boats should a landing be attempted. The *Desirée* frigate was ordered to

rake the southernmost ship of the enemy's line, and then join the other frigates in their attack to the northward. This service was performed by Captain Inman in a masterly style at the instant we were passing; he ran down under his three topsails, came to the wind on the larboard tack about half-cable's length ahead of her, hove all back, gave her his broadside, filled and made sail, then tacked and ran down to his station.

The *Desirée* was a beautiful French frigate of 48 guns, which this gallant officer had himself cut out of a bay on the French coast when he commanded the *Andromeda*.¹ The *Russell*, in running down to her station, grounded. Observing her awkward predicament, we reserved our fire till we came abreast of her opponents, and honoured them with our first broadside. The crew of the *Russell* gave us three cheers, to thank us for our assistance, and to let us know they were not disheartened by their accident. We continued firing all the way down between our own ships; and when abreast of the Vice-Admiral gave him three hearty cheers, which compliment was returned by his men at their guns. We anchored about ten, but not precisely in the station originally intended, for this reason, that two of the ships stationed by Lord Nelson ahead of us never made their appearance. One of them, the *Bellona*, ran aground; the *Polyphemus*, which was the other, took the place of the *Agamemnon* per signal, who remained

¹ One of the officers employed in that exploit gave me the following anecdote. The *Andromeda* anchored in the offing, and he was sent in shore in a little schooner they had taken on the coast. In the midst of the action he discovered a small open boat very busy near him, and hailed her with a threat of firing into her. To his great surprise he discovered his own captain, who, not being able to remain on board while active service was to be carried on, had left his ship, and pulled all the way in his cutter to assist in the enterprise. W. S. M.

at her anchorage "being unable [says Lord Nelson's letter] to weather the shoal." This brought us much nearer the Crown Islands, and last but one, (the *Defiance*) in the line.

When the ship came to, I was on the quarter-deck, and saw Captain Mosse on the poop; his card of instructions was in his left hand, and his right was raised to his mouth with the speaking-trumpet, through which he gave the word, "Cut away the anchor." I returned to my station at the aftermost guns; and in a few minutes the Captain was brought aft perfectly dead. Colonel Hutchinson was with me, and was asked if he thought it right that the Captain should be carried below; he answered that he saw no sign of life, and it might only damp the spirits of the men. He was then laid in the stern walk, and a flag thrown over him. Colonel Hutchinson turned round and exclaimed with tears in his eyes, "Poor man! he has left a wife and family to lament him." I did not see the Captain fall, but I understood afterwards from the quartermaster at the gun (Edward Kilgore) that he had left the poop, and fell on the quarter-deck in the very spot where I stood when the anchor was cut away.

I was conscious that employment was the surest mode to escape those unpleasant sensations which must arise in every one's breast that has time for reflection in such a situation. I therefore pulled off my coat, helped to run out the gun, handed the powder, and literally worked as hard as a dray-horse. Every gun is supplied at first with a portion of shot, wadding, &c., close by it; but when these were expended, we applied to a reserve placed by the mainmast. It immediately occurred to me that I could not be more usefully employed than in conveying this supply, which would enable the stronger ones to remain at

the guns; for the men wanted no stimulus to keep them to their duty, nor any directions how to perform it. The only cautions I remember to have given were hinted to me by the gunner before the action, viz. to worm the guns frequently, that no fire might remain from the old cartridge, to fire two round-shot in each gun, and to use nothing else while round-shot could be had. The men remained at the wheel for a very considerable time after the ship was anchored, in order to steady her; for the shock of bringing up so suddenly occasioned a very considerable "oscillation" (if I may apply that term). As I was returning from the mainmast, and was abreast of the little binnacle, a shot came in at the port under the poop-ladder and carried away the wheel; and three out of the four men stationed at it were either killed or wounded, besides one or two at the gun. Lieutenant Dennis, of the Forty-Ninth grenadiers [company] had just come up the companion-ladder, and was going aft; the splinters shattered his sword, which was in the sheath, into three pieces, and tore off the finger-ends of his left hand. This, however, he scarcely seemed aware of, for, lifting up the sheath with his bloody fingers, he called out, "Look here, Colonel!" On being reminded by Colonel Hutchinson of his wounded hand, he twisted his handkerchief round it, and set up a huzza, which was soon repeated throughout the ship. This brave officer had, strictly speaking, no particular duty to do; those soldiers who were intended to assist in the projected assault were dressed in full uniform and stationed upon the poop and on the gangway where they kept up a fire of musketry, till they were moved down so fast that they were ordered below to wait further orders. The remainder, in their working-jackets without accoutre-

ments, were attached to the great guns; so that some of the officers, being unacquainted with ship's duty, thought it prudent to retire. Dennis, though he could not act against the enemy, found means to make himself useful; he flew through every part of the ship, and when he found any of his men wounded carried him in his arms down to the cockpit. When the carnage was greatest he encouraged his men by applauding their conduct, and frequently began a huzza, which is of more importance than might generally be imagined; for the men have no other communication throughout the ship; but when a shout is set up, it runs from deck to deck, and they know that their comrades are, some of them, alive and in good spirits.

Lieutenant - Colonel Hutchinson, being commanding officer of this detachment, did not leave the quarter-deck, but walked backward and forward with coolness and composure; till at length, seeing the improbability of being ordered away, he begged I would employ him if I thought he could do any good. I was at this time seated on the deck, cutting the wads asunder for the guns; and the Colonel, notwithstanding the danger attending his uniform breeches, sat himself down and went to work very busily. Indeed, afterwards, I was often obliged to leave the charge of my guns to the Colonel, for I was now the only midshipman left on the quarter-deck; and was therefore employed by Mr. Yelland, the commanding officer, as his aide-de-camp, and despatched occasionally into all parts of the ship. On my return, the Colonel made his report of what had passed in my absence.

Our signal-midshipman (the Honourable William Bowes) was bruised from head to foot with splinters in such a manner as compelled him to leave the deck; Mr. Levescombe,

another midshipman, who was my companion on the quarter-deck, and who was as cool and apparently unconcerned as usual, shared the same fate. I attended him to the lower deck, but could not prevail upon myself to set foot on the cockpit-ladder; so there I left him to make the best of his way. As the splinters were so plentiful, it may be wondered how I escaped; the fact is I did not escape entirely. When the wheel was shot away, I was in a cloud; but being some little distance before the wheel I did not receive any of the larger pieces. When I passed backwards and forwards between my quarters and the mainmast, I went on the opposite side to that which was engaged, and by that means probably escaped a severe wound; for as I was returning with two shot in one hand and a cheese (or packet) of wads in the other, I received a pretty smart blow on my right cheek. I dropped my shot, just as a monkey does a hot potato, and clapped my hand to the place, which I found rather bloody, and immediately ran aft to get my handkerchief out of the coat-pocket. My friend Colonel Hutchinson came to me immediately, to return the compliment I had paid him when passing the Castle,¹ and seemed really afraid lest my jaw was broken; however after having felt it and found all right, he let me return for my burthen.

Towards the close of the action the Colonel reported to me that the guns wanted quill or tin tubes (which are used as more safe and expeditious than loose priming), and wanted me to send some one, adding, "his own men were too ignorant of the ship, or he would have sent one before my re-

¹ What this was, the writer has not explained. In a previous page it is stated that "not one of their shot [from Cronberg Castle] reached us."

turn." I told him, "I knew no one that could so well be spared as myself." He, however, objected to my going, and as I was aware of the dreadful slaughter which had taken place in the centre of the ship, I was not very fond of the jaunt; but my conscience would not let me send another on an errand I was afraid to undertake myself, and away I posted towards the fore magazine. When I arrived on the maindeck, along which I had to pass, there was *not a single man standing* the whole way from the mainmast forward, a district containing eight guns on a side, some of which were run out ready for firing; others lay dismounted; and others remained as they were after recoiling. In this dreary scene I shall be excused for shuddering as I walked across the body of a dead soldier. I hastened down the fore-ladder to the lower deck, and felt really relieved to find somebody alive; from thence I reached the fore-cockpit, where I was obliged to wait a few minutes for my cargo; and after this pause I own I felt something like regret, if not fear, as I remounted the ladder on my return. This, however, entirely subsided when I saw the sun shining and the old blue ensign flying as lofty as ever. I never felt the genuine sense of glory so completely as at that moment; and if I had seen any one attempt to haul that ensign down, I could have run aft and shot him dead in as determined a manner as the celebrated Paul Jones. I took off my hat by an involuntary motion, and gave three cheers as I jumped on to the quarter-deck: Colonel Hutchinson welcomed me at my quarters as if I had been on a hazardous enterprise and had returned in triumph; Mr. Yelland also expressed great satisfaction at seeing me in such high spirits and so active. This brave veteran had taken care to have the decks swept, and everything

clean and nice before we went into action. He had dressed himself in full uniform, with his cocked-hat set on square, his shirt-frill stiff starched, and his cravat tied tight under his chin as usual. After the fall of our poor Captain, he sent me down to desire the lieutenants from the different quarters to come on deck, when he informed them of the Captain's death, and appointed himself, of course, commanding officer; the remaining officers, having, as it were, sworn fealty to him, returned to their different stations. How he escaped unhurt seems wonderful: several times I lost sight of him in a cloud of splinters; as they subsided I saw first his cocked-hat emerging, then by degrees the rest of his person, his face smiling, so that altogether one might imagine him dressed for his wedding-day. Soon after my return from the magazine Mr. Ponsonby (midshipman), who had been quartered on the fore-castle, came on to the quarter-deck, his face and the collar of his coat partly covered with a coagulated compost of human blood and brains. He presented himself and three of his men to Mr. Yelland as all that were left, and requested he would apply them where he thought proper, as they were no longer of service by themselves. There were two other officers quartered on the fore-castle, the boatswain, who was very dangerously wounded in the body, and Mr. Morgan (midshipman), who had both feet shot off, and I suppose twenty men, of whom only three remained with poor Ponsonby. Mr. Yelland shook his head at Ponsonby's relation, and begged, as he had fought so gallantly, that he would attach himself and men to whatever quarters he thought proper; so they remained where they were on the quarter-deck.

The fire about one grew very slack on both sides.

War wearied hath performed what war
can do.

Most of the enemy's vessels had struck their colours, in consequence of which I was desired to send Mr. Home (lieutenant), who commanded the flat-bottomed boat and launch which were both manned and armed alongside, to board the prizes opposed to us. He accordingly set off for that purpose; when almost half way he saw a boat which was probably sent on the same errand knocked to pieces, the crew of which he picked up; but as the other ships and batteries still continued firing, he thought it in vain to attempt boarding the prizes, which were moreover prepared to resist, notwithstanding they had struck their colours. Mr. Home then pulled on board the *Elephant* to know if Lord Nelson would cease firing. His Lordship desired him not to think of the prizes, but return to his own ship, and keep a look-out on the Rear-Admiral ahead of us, for that he had sent in a flag of truce, and if it was accepted, he should remove from the scene of action as soon as possible. Shortly after we saw two boats each carrying a white flag forward, and abaft one had an English the other a Danish Jack. The fact is, that during the contest Lord Nelson wrote a letter to the Crown Prince of Denmark, beginning in the following manner, "The brave English to their brethren the brave Danes"; he concluded by saying that if a truce was not consented to, he should be compelled to destroy not only the vessels he had captured, but also the brave men who had defended them. The truce was agreed to, and by degrees the firing ceased.

About two the Rear-Admiral Graves hailed our ship as he passed by from the *Elephant* to the *Defiance*, and desired us to cut our cable and follow him out. But we had very near been beforehand with him. A

little before all this passed I saw Mr. Yelland storming and raving, stamping and swearing, as if he had been in a high state of delirium;

Horrid confusion heaped
Upon confusion rose.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hutchinson, Lieutenant Bateman, Jack Ponsonby, the Master, Mr. Grey, and my old friend Dennis were standing round and endeavouring to quiet him. I could not conceive what all this meant; till at length, when the storm subsided, Colonel Hutchinson told me that Mr. Bateman, who was quartered in the after part of the lower deck, had discovered a man with an axe just about to cut the cable by which the ship rode. The man declared he had been called to from above to do it; but Mr. Bateman chose to have better authority upon so serious a point, and for this purpose came on deck with the Master, &c. to inquire of Mr. Yelland. The very mention of it nearly upset the old gentleman; for some time he could only say "Where is the rascal? Who is the rascal?" &c., and had he fallen in with the poor man he would most certainly have run him through the body without much further inquiry. When they had quieted him a little, they had some trouble to convince him that the mischief was not actually done. "Are you sure, Mr. Bateman, you stopped the villain in time? Mr. Grey, go down yourself and see all fast." "Sir, I come from thence." "Go again, sir." The origin of all this confusion was this. The small bower-anchor was shot from the bows, and the spring hawser which was fixed to it prevented the ship's head from being sheered off from the Crown batteries upon which they wanted the guns to bear; when this was discovered, some one called out "Cut it away." This being repeated from one

to the other reached the poor fellow, who had caused all this uproar by mistaking the cable for the hawser.

About half-past two the Rear-Admiral made our signal to cut, which I answered by holding the pendant in the mizen rigging. The *Ganges*, which was next astern of us, and had received but little damage, having but six men killed and wounded, was under way before we could well look about us. Our decks were choked with disabled guns; near half our complement were either killed or wounded; and there was not fore and aft one single brace or bowline that was not shot away, so that the sails could not possibly be directed one way or the other, but hung on the caps as when we first anchored. The consequence was that the *Ganges* came directly on board us, upon the larboard quarter, her jibboom passing over the quarter-deck, and her spritsail yard grappling with our main and mizen rigging. Both ships were now alike ungovernable, and both were drifting fast towards the Crown Islands. To their perpetual shame be it spoken, they took advantage of our distress, and opened their fire again upon us. While we were busy in cutting away such parts of the rigging as held the two ships together, the *Ganges* let fall another anchor, and we drifted clear of her, leaving one of our mizen-topmen (named John Town) upon her bowsprit; the lad had leaped on to it to assist more effectually in clearing away. When he found himself left on board the *Ganges* he began to swear most unmercifully; and at length came down into the head and plunged from the bumpkin into the water. The *Monarch* was still perfectly ungovernable, and we continued to drift towards the Crown Islands. Mr. Yelland desired me to fetch the signal-book and make the signal for boats to tow.

Recollecting that the book had been deposited in the stern-walk, I ran thither for it; and as I skipped along over the rubbish that lay about I set my foot directly on the body of our dead Captain, which, as I before observed, was covered with a flag. When I discovered it, I felt a sensation of horror that chilled my blood, and apparently arrested its course. Fortunately I had not much time to pause and reflect, but hastened out at the other end of the gallery, and ran on to the poop, to make the signal. When I got there, I was obliged to call for some help, for not a man was left on the poop; the signal-midshipman, as I observed, was wounded, his assistant, a fine young man about twenty or twenty-one years old, had his leg shot off, and went down without assistance into the cockpit, where, from the number of persons the surgeons had to attend, he actually bled to death. What few soldiers remained alive were, as before stated, sent down below. I found a musket, the barrel of which was bent into a semicircle; this I apprehended must have been struck on the muzzle at the very instant the man was presenting it; it could not otherwise have been driven into that form. There was a barrel of water placed on the poop, which was knocked to pieces, and a basket, or skep, of pistols were scattered about.

While I was making the signal, I discovered the lad I mentioned swimming in the water; when some of the boats approached the ship I hailed them to go and pick him up; but he had swum to a bit of wreck that was floating by, and desired them to go and tow the ship without minding him; he was, however, brought on board. When the boats had succeeded in pulling the ship's head round, we steered her out by hand, having no wheel.

Having now time to stand still, I found those powerful sensations arising from too long abstinence no longer to be resisted. I had but little appetite for breakfast at seven o'clock; our usual dinner hour was twelve; it was now three, and I had been during the interval very hard at work. Accordingly down I sallied to the gun-room, and without much ceremony broke open the gunner's locker, where I found half a cheese and some cold potatoes; but, what was most valuable, a can of fresh water. Having well drenched my inside with repeated draughts, I had so much thought about me as to send it to poor Mr. Yelland, who I knew could not leave the deck. The remainder I served indiscriminately among the seamen; and having on further examination discovered a bag of biscuit, I was enabled to distribute bread and cheese to several, as far as it would go; we left nothing eatable behind.

While I was thus employed, I heard a most tremendous explosion, and looking out at the port saw an immense mass of black smoke in the air, with sparks of fire and rafters scarce discernible from the thickness of the cloud. This proved to be the ship of the Danish Commodore, which I had before observed to be on fire, and which now blew up. Some of the crew were saved by our boats, but many lost their lives; fortunately our men had not yet taken possession of her. She is supposed to have been set on fire by some carcasses fired from the carronades of the *Ardent*.

Before we quitted our station abreast of the enemy, the whole line to the southward of the Crown Islands had struck their colours, except one frigate which made her escape. The principal defence of the town being thus removed, the bomb-vessels moved close in, and had the articles of the subsequent treaty not been agreed to, the whole

would have been a heap of ruins in a few hours.

The principal articles of the treaty were, that Denmark should withdraw from the confederacy; that the prisoners should be landed as soon as convenient; and that our wounded should be supplied with fresh provisions, vegetables, &c. from the shore, for which a fair price should be paid.

Having now, I trust, given a pretty correct narrative of the proceedings of Lord Nelson's squadron, I must return to the reserve under Sir Hyde Parker. But before I make any assertion respecting that officer's conduct, I wish it to be understood that I speak only from report, though I believe my report to be a just one. I was much too busily engaged to pay any attention to that division during the action; but it appears that they got under way, nearly at the same time we did, from their anchorage off the northern entrance to Copenhagen. Having the wind and tide nearly ahead we must suppose they were unable to work against them; for it seems they anchored again. And Sir Hyde Parker seeing two of our line aground, viz. the *Bellona* and *Russell*, and a third, the *Agamemnon* lying at her original anchorage, made the signal to discontinue the action, which signal was, I understand, repeated by the *Agamemnon*. But Lord Nelson (so the story goes) had but one eye, which he was of necessity obliged to keep upon the enemy, so that he saw nothing of it. Rear-Admiral Graves was under the immediate orders of Lord Nelson, so that he repeated the signal No. 16, "Engage the enemy as close as possible," and no other.

Towards the close of the action, from the tide changing, or from some other unknown cause, the reserve made a second attempt to come into action; and after the truce was settled, two of his headmost ships were sufficiently

advanced to return the fire we had received from the Crown batteries by a few broadsides; the whole of that division then anchored in the station we had quitted. I really do not know that it was in the power of Sir Hyde Parker's division to come up before they did; but we certainly know that, if they could, the two three-decked ships, *London* and *St. George*, would soon have silenced the Crown batteries, and have saved torrents of English blood. We also know that Sir Hyde Parker was soon after recalled, and has not since been heard of. Laying these things together we cannot wonder at the insinuations made by those of our division who suffered so severely.

But I have a charge against Sir Hyde Parker which I can substantiate, and which ought not readily to be forgiven. Mr. Yelland fought our ship like a lion through the whole action, as we have seen; he had been twenty years in the service, and, according to established usage, had an undoubted claim upon the Commander-in-Chief for immediate promotion. He applied, and Lord Nelson applied for him, but a stranger was sent on board us, who had "borne none of the burthen and heat of the day;" and Mr. Yelland was told he might take the place of Sir Hyde's first lieutenant, who was promoted, and wait another opportunity: he very properly considered this an insult, and preferred being first lieutenant in the ship he had fought, and trusting to his country for reward, rather than receive it from Sir H. Parker when he might think proper to grant it as a favour. On his arrival in England Mr. Yelland

was made master and commander; but having no recommendation from the Commander-in-Chief he remained some time out of employment. I understand he is since made post-captain; where he is I know not.

I am sorry to add Mr. Yelland's is not a singular instance; many officers from Sir Hyde Parker's division were promoted to the detriment of those who had fought so bravely. I cannot be thought to say this from envy or disappointment; I had nothing to expect nor to wish. On my joining the *Blenheim* Admiral Dickson had me rated master's mate, a reward as unexpected as it was in some respects unmerited, for I certainly was not qualified for the situation. It was however impossible to be otherwise than flattered by this mark of approbation.

[The end of the next paragraph is unfortunately lost beyond recovery. So far as it goes, it is to the following effect.]

It is now necessary to pay some little regard to my own ship, the *Monarch*, which we left under sail standing from the enemy, and as she was not in a state to go far without repair, it is very necessary to bring her to an anchor again as soon as we can; but this is not to be done speedily, for we had not a cable in the ship that was not shot through and through. The rest of the squadron all anchored at a short distance from the scene of action; and it must have been a curious sight to those unacquainted with the cause to see the old *Monarch* paying away by herself at such a rate. The Admiral.

(*Cetera desunt.* F. M. M.)

ON A DEVONSHIRE TROUT-STREAM.

A COLD wind is blowing from a gray sky ; a wind that shifts restlessly from south-east to west and north of west, and cannot make up its mind from what quarter it shall blow, whether it shall bring rain or snow, cloud or sunshine. All around us are hills covered with yellow grass and brown trees, laurels and rhododendrons hardly less brown than the trees, and the very gorse, which one had imagined to be hardy, brown and dead after terrible weeks of frost. The ewes with their lambs to leeward of them look bored and puzzled, as though their calculations as to the time for addition to the flock had been unexpectedly upset ; the lambs themselves seem hardly to have the energy to wag their tails when the time for refreshment comes. In sunny New Zealand we have seen them wag their tails over an india-rubber spout set in a troughful of milk with an energy at least equal to that which they consecrate to the founts of nature ; but here at this moment they seem to have lost all heart for it. And yet the month is April and the place North Devon. The very rooks are silent and preoccupied, oppressed perhaps by the recollection that during many bitter weeks they demeaned themselves to accept dog-biscuit from human hands in a human backyard, and were glad even on such terms to escape starvation. Yet in December we saw them as busy over affairs of courtship as though the spring were already come. As to black-birds and thrushes, they can have no song left to sing except a dirge for the hundreds of their kind that have perished in the hedgerows. The very pigeons flap away with a guilty sus-

picious rapidity as though the guns had not been laid to rest two whole months ago ; whereas they ought to be announcing to the world in voluptuous coos that they could, if they would, tell an interesting story about two little white eggs on a certain rude bundle of twigs in a certain *pinus insignis*. And yet though not a green leaf is to be seen, it is really April and not December, for we have nine feet of greenheart in our hand and are going a-fishing.

The sky is unpromising ; is the water any better ? Alas, no ! though the clouds are dark the water contrives somehow to be bright ; it is running low, and frets and shivers under the cross contradictory gusts of wind as though for once it took no pleasure in hurrying to the sea ; pale also and clear is it, showing no trace of the rich peaty tint that we love to see. Looking up towards its source twelve or fourteen miles away, we can mark the great round hills of Exmoor dry and yellow as the fields around us, as much as to say, no water to be expected from here. It is the worst conceivable day for fishing, but we are not on that account to be balked of the pleasure of throwing a fly. We have not stolen one extra day from the streets of London for the sake of keeping the rod in its case ; so let us put on a March brown and a blue-upright, the only two flies that one wants in North Devon, and let them float down the water in their most appetising fashion. Cast and cast and cast again ; it is all to no purpose. We know every stone in this little stream and are perfectly certain that there is a trout under that stump,

behind that rock, at the head of that stickle ; but though we present the blue upright in its most seductive attitude not one of them will move. No matter, let us flog on, for the river is good company, and following its course is like turning over the pages of an old journal. Though no trout come up from under the root of that overhanging oak tree, yet there comes at any rate a reminiscence. Ten years ago, one fine September evening, we saw turn to bay under that very tree the most gallant stag that ever we had the luck to follow. Twenty miles away on the cliffs overhanging the Bristol Channel we roused him ; and we can see him now as he jumped out of the heather, his coat as bright as a thoroughbred's, and made his point straight across the forest of Exmoor. Then came a desperate gallop of miles without a check over the heather that skirts the forest, over the grass of the forest itself, across the detestable wet ground where the Exmoor rivers rise, and at last down into the wooded valley of this very river. How the pack raced, and, alas, how they tailed, and how many miles separated the first horse in the race from the last ! But as we plunged into the valley we noted that the leading hound was not the young one that had led the way over the forest but a veteran who had kept himself for the last ; and thereby we knew that our deer was sinking. Sinking, yes ! but not beaten yet. For seven more miles did he travel down the valley, now in the covert, now in the water, constantly seeking the stream to refresh himself, but unable for long to keep himself away from it ; until at last he could leave it no longer, and the veteran leading hound casting himself rapidly down the bank, caught view of his quarry under the oak tree and lifted up a great gruff voice to tell us of his triumph. People who know the bay of

hounds in the mass only do not realise that the voice of a single hound is hardly distinguishable from the voice of a sheep-dog ; but it was not many seconds before the veteran's solo was increased to a chorus, and presently there was a little group of weary men, horses, and hounds gathered round a motionless brown body, and we knew that a historic run was over and that we must get our horses home somehow.

Cast and cast and cast ; the wind for the moment is less cold, the river winds in close under a covert, and here is a pool where we have caught many a trout, though it is an awkward place. Suddenly there is a wild clucking at our feet, and a water-hen squatters across the pool with all possible uproar. Apparently we have intruded on her domestic arrangements, for there in the hollow of an old alder-stump are seven little dirty-coloured eggs, and in revenge she has spoiled the pool for us. Now the river clears itself from under the covert and flows under a railway-viaduct ; on that viaduct too, most unexpected of places, we have seen a red deer turn to bay and breathe his last. We pass under it and through a high iron fence into a deer-park ; a park for fallow-deer, be it understood, for a red deer makes nothing of eight feet of iron rails. We have a favourite pool under some dark yew trees a little further down ; a quiet, sequestered spot where fish may be hungry. No, not a sign of a trout ! A heron rises and flaps slowly away two hundred yards ahead, aware of our presence long before we were aware of his. Fifty years ago there was a heronry among these very beech trees, which was destroyed by some enthusiastic anglers on account of the havoc wrought by the birds among the trout ; but the herons still seem to cherish an affection for it and visit it, two, three, and four pairs of them together. Surely though they must have left a

trout or two to take our fly; let us creep in under the low branches for a cast into the innermost recesses of the pool. Angels and ministers of grace defend us! What is it that we have stumbled on, which makes off with such a flounder and crash? Only a fallow buck, lean and ragged, limping painfully away up the hill. He was injured in a battle for a wife in October and has been an outcast ever since, according to the inexorable law of his kind. He will recover now that he has passed through the winter, and, though the growth of his horns will almost certainly suffer, will probably be as uxorious as ever next October and will be killed outright for his pains.

Cast and cast and cast! We are now on a long straight reach where no boughs lie in wait to catch the carelessly thrown fly, and where for that very reason many a small boy has been brought to make his first essay with the rod. It is a bit of vandalism, this same straight reach, being part of an elaborate plan carried out by the reigning squire at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Looking about us we see avenues and remains of avenues, beech, oak, lime, and Scotch fir stretching in every direction; and on the hill above the bank of the stream a few hundred yards below us is a sort of parody on a Grecian temple. A century ago there were three or four dozen of such temples scattered about on various eminent sites, with the idea apparently of presenting to the spectator a landscape after the classical manner wherever he may turn his eyes. Obelisks, pyramids, a triumphal arch, a sham castle and a sham village served to provide an interesting object at the end of every avenue, and still furnish a puzzle to the rustic stranger; though time and westerly gales have destroyed many of the avenues, and reduced

others to isolated clumps. Did ever quainter fashion than this pseudo-classical formalism invade rural England? The surprising thing too is that these toys were for the most part uncommonly well built, and easily converted, when the fashion passed away, into habitable dwellings, so that the sham church has become a real cottage, and the Grecian temple a home for the British gamekeeper.

Now the river passes out of the deer-park and swings itself freely under the oak-coppice woods once more. And see, there is some one fishing before us, the miller, the instructor of our youth in the gentle art and the best trout-fisherman in North Devon. His rod is made out of half-a-dozen scraps of rods with a joint of unmistakable ashplant in the middle; but he will take more trout with it than other men with the finest creation from the Strand. "Can't move a fish," he answers to our interested inquiry. "Tis a surprising thing" he adds reflectively in his richest Devon, "that all the beggars should be of the same mind;" and undoubtedly if human beings could occasionally show the same unanimity as trout, the world would be governed far more easily than it is.

And now the river buries itself under overhanging beech trees; there is covert on one side and an orchard on the other, so that it is useless to attempt it with a rod. Still this hidden reach is, we blush to confess, singularly well known to us, for there is a weir at the head of it, and consequently, when the water is low in the autumn, a good many salmon are sometimes compelled to wait for a flood in the lower pools. Now the sight of a salmon lying for weeks under the same rock, and refusing, very naturally, to be beguiled by any lure that may be offered him is more than a boy can bear; and so it came

about that one fine day, many years ago, two boys came down stealthily through the beech trees armed with a trolling-rod and sixty yards of strong line, with a large cod-hook attached to the end thereof. Arrived at the scene of action, one of them cut a hazel wand and made that also fast to the cod-hook, and therewith stepped into the water, leaving his companion on the bank with the rod. We seem still to see him as he peered into the pool, and then quietly lay down on his side in the water and thrust the fateful wand gently down; we can remember his face growing redder and redder as his arm disappeared deeper and deeper into the pool, till the water lapped first to his lips and then to his nose, when with a convulsive jerk he struck his blow and left hold of the wand. Before we knew what had happened a great fourteen-pound salmon came tearing down the pool like a flash of light, making a wave like a torpedo-boat down the shallows. Frantic exhortations to hold him up and give him the butt were utterly thrown away, for it was all that we could do, between the strength of the fish and our own uncontrollable laughter, to hold the rod at all. Away went the whole sixty yards of line with a dismal scream; the fish disappeared from sight; and then the strain on the rod ceased and the first salmon was gone. No matter; there were still two more of them under the same rock. The process was repeated over a second fish, which frightened us out of our wits by jumping straight into the overhanging boughs, from whence, after a brief but desperate struggle, in which we took an active share, he soon managed to kick himself free. The third fish, like the first, went down stream at express speed, completely overpowering the tenant of the rod, and would probably have made his escape also had not the

other sinner in desperation seized the line in the water and hauled him in hand over hand. Having captured our fish, there arose the awkward question what we should do with him, for we knew that no one would believe us if we said that we had caught him fairly; so we put him into a shallow from which he could not escape, and studied him attentively for an hour or so, poking him up when he seemed to be feeble and stroking him down when he showed signs of irritation; finally we decided to let him go. That fish was not in his former place under the rock when we came to look for him next day.

In truth the salmon in these upper waters are a sad nuisance. Under stress of agricultural improvement, drainage, and the like, these little streams have lost their former even flow; they are either in high flood or else reduced to a mere trickle. The rain on the hills, instead of oozing down to the rivers drop by drop, is hurried into them by a thousand artificial channels, and causes them to rise and fall with almost mercurial rapidity. A salmon starts up from the sea on the top of a flood and finds, before he has travelled very far, that the water is too low to allow him to travel further. So there he remains in the pool of his choice, refusing any lure offered to him by man, devouring all the young trout within reach, and steadily losing condition. When winter comes with constant heavy rain he makes his way up almost to the peat-beds where the waters rise; but he does not come back. No matter how red and lank and miserable he be, he is picked out of the shallows with net or gaff or spear, and makes a meal for the labourer on the moor,—small blame to the labourer. It may be asked what about the law? Well, without hinting at the name of the watershed to which we refer, we may

say that from the tidal water to the peat-bog the Fishery Acts are a dead letter, for the very simple reason that there is not the will in the one case nor the power in the other to enforce them. In the estuary the net-fishermen capture and sell salmon during the close season with hardly even a show of concealment. Why? Because they are Conservatives and the borough magistrates Radicals; and the Radicals hope to gain their votes in municipal and general elections by allowing the Conservatives to break the law. Considering the extreme timidity of small borough magistrates, the result would probably be the same if the parties were to exchange opinions. The fishermen, too, are a lawless lot, and would make no great matter of killing an obnoxious water-bailiff. A very few years ago, when a courageous magistrate ventured to impose a heavy penalty on one of them, his companions in the court there and then stormed the bench and drove the occupants to fly for their lives. Even so, it was difficult to find more than one magistrate who would give evidence against them. Such are among the unrecognised beauties of local government.

But we have wandered far away from the river, though we can never throw a fly in it without reflecting, not without sadness, on the old days when we never flogged patiently over two miles of water without catching at least a dozen if not two dozen little trout. Let us cast on, though with faint hope, yet with all our old attention to favourite spots. What is this? Actually a fish tugging hard at the blue upright. He fights well, this absurd little six-ounce creature, as hard as though he were a five-pound grilse, so different from the heavier but more torpid trout in more celebrated streams. He is soon on the bank and has ceased his fighting for ever; but probably

there is another in the same rock basin waiting for what heaven will send him. Yes, there is another, and a third and a fourth and a fifth; this is more like old days. Small they are, like all the fish in these moor streams; but our tackle is light enough to give them plenty of play, and they certainly make the most of it. Why, we wonder, do these same brook-trout when turned into an equally small and rapid stream in New Zealand grow to average a pound in weight, and in the case of individual monsters to scale even eight pounds? But we are not in New Zealand now, and must be content with home and its humble six-ounce fish. We have fished the rock basin till it will yield us no more, and go on down the stream with better hope. Not a fish moves for the next six hundred yards, and we settle down to dreaming and despair once more. A tiny tributary with a mere trickle of water, flowing into a miniature pool little bigger than a portmanteau and overhung with laurels, distracts us for a moment from the river. Let us shorten our line for just one cast at the tail of the pool. Ah, we were right! Up comes a little fellow with savage energy, and tries hard to make away up stream, which, however, must by no means be permitted lest he disturb his neighbours. Another cast, so soon as he is disposed of, just a foot above the last, brings another to the bank; and a third cast, a little higher again, attracts two more, one to each fly, so that we have the satisfaction of playing them together within a space the size of a hip-bath, and ultimately landing them both. Now why should there be four hungry trout in that cupful of water and not one in the river ten yards away?

The river-bank becomes high now, and we scramble down to fish from the foot of it. A wild flutter of

wings and a diabolical sound of crowing sends our heart into our mouth, and away sails a great pied cock-pheasant in a panic of haste. Well we know that bird; he is the only pied pheasant in the place, and he has managed to survive through four seasons, so that his spurs must be at least an inch long. Year after year he has given us a chance of killing him; and year after year, needless to say, owing to an unprecedented combination of adverse circumstances, we have failed to bring him to bag. The result is that he is always associated with our own name by beaters and gamekeepers, and has become, in fact, a perpetual reproach to us. Moreover, he has always taken care to show himself exactly when a gallery of spectators has been present to witness our failure. The ill-omened bird is hardly out of sight, and we have not resumed our work with the rod, when, as usual, a keeper suddenly appears on the scene. We are delighted to see him, for we have been friends since boyhood, but we wish he would smother his smile more successfully. Even if the pied cock be still in the land of the living, the shooting-season is at any rate over, and by-gones should be by-gones.

What a miserable creature one feels with one's pasty London face alongside a fresh-looking rustic; and yet we are as truly countrybred as even this man, and might be such as he is but for our fate. He too was taken up to London, and might have been a rich and portly butler by this time, but that, being a gamekeeper's son, he threw up high wages and soft living, and preferred the much severer but freer calling of his father. He is full of news, which he imparts as he follows us down the bank. He supposes we have heard that poor John M. is dead. Yes, with sorrow we have; how was it? Well, no one

very well knows; but they found his pony-cart smashed up in the hedge-trough, the pony grazing a few hundred yards further on, and poor John insensible in the road. They took him home and all the neighbours came in and holloed down the ear of him, but he never spoke again and was dead in a couple of hours. "Did you holloed down the ear of him too?" we ask. "Oh yes, sir, holloed so loud as I could, but I couldn't make 'un hear, nor no one else, though we all tried." Poor John's death-bed rises before us as a strange mixture of tragedy and comedy, and we are fain to change the subject. What other news? "Well, Philip H. is dead too. He shot himself accidental in the head with a revolver years ago when he was a marine, and the doctor considers it was the bullet a-moving; but Philip went to chapel Sunday and prayed violent against Jimmy Smith as a 'biter and slanderer; and after that he was took with fits. Doctor said he was to be kept quiet; but all the chapel folks went up and prayed, and cried, and screamed over him, and I forget how many fits it was he had, more than a hundred I think they said, Monday and Tuesday; and Wednesday he died. And Jimmy saith he sha'n't go to chapel no more to be called 'biter and slanderer, for he never spoke no harm of Philip; and he was in church last Sunday and Sunday before; and they do tell me he means to join the choir, though I never heard tell that he could sing." Poor Philip! So a bullet in your head (and even before the advent of the bullet, that head was not a very clear one,) has added a recruit to the ranks of Anglicanism, and the chapel knows your rather gruesome eloquence no more.

Well, what else? Why, of course we have heard that old Mary is dead; she was a hundred and two years old

for certain. Yes, we remember old Mary well, and her stories of the terrible years of the great war when the people lived on black bread and had not too much of that. To this day not a poor man in the district will eat brown bread, owing to the memories that have survived from those days. We have heard her tell too of the time when she was a parish 'prentice, and every market-day went up to that awkward corner in the old pack-road, lest her master returning drunk to the farm should miss the turning and break his neck. "The parson preached a beautiful sermon on a long and blameless life," continues the keeper; "but old Charlotte up to the almshouse, who's ninety-two you know, sir, *she* saith that, when she was a maid, old Mary wasn't no better than she should have been." Charitable old Charlotte! but there is in this reminiscence no malicious intention, but simply desire to add to her own importance. For what profit is it to remember the village scandals of the year of Waterloo and not repeat them eighty years after?

But the budget of news is not exhausted yet. A forest-deer has come down off the moor into those very coverts around us. Harry saw him one evening and saith he was a regular monster, as big as a bullock; but Harry was coming back from market, so one can't depend on what he saith. Foxes there be in plenty; he bolted one out of a rabbit-burrow not three weeks ago when ferreting. "Do you mind the time, sir, when we found one the same way some years back?" he adds. Indeed we do, for it was a curious sight. The terriers barked at every hole in the burrow with unusual keenness; but for some reason the ferret soon came back to us, and could not be induced to try again. So we then put in another ferret, a very large one, with a line, in order

to see what he could do. He stayed in for some time, and could only be drawn back with great difficulty an inch at a time; but at last, after digging towards him for some way, we brought him to the light, and there to our amazement we found his teeth closed fast in the throat of a vixen, in such sort that she could neither hurt him nor shake him off. We released her, and away she went little the worse, leaving six little cubs behind her, every one of which, however, she transported on the very same night to an earth three miles away. The ferret also was none the worse, though so savage after his desperate encounter that it was awkward work to handle him.

It is lucky for us that we have had a companion all this time, for not a trout will look at our flies. The river now bends under overhanging woods again for a short distance, and the keeper, unable to follow us further, wishes us good-day. We really must have a fish out of the pool at the entrance to the covert, where the water pours so merrily over the shallow gravel ridge into the rock bed. Yes, they are hungry here, though why hungrier than elsewhere is a mystery. Five are brought to the bank in quick succession, and a sixth, whom we judge to have been a half-pounder, after a desperate tussle manages to beat us. And now we must go through the covert for a time before we can fish again. Never have we seen it look so wintry before in April; not a tuft of green on the larches, not a sign of resurrection in the brown lifeless bracken; a few primroses, it is true, here and there, but not the carpet that there should be. For all that one can judge from the appearance of things, there might well be a woodcock lying by that holly tree where the warm spring bubbles out of the moss to join the river. Let us see at

any rate. No; we can hear a scampering of tiny feet over dead leaves, but not the bright flip-flap of the brown, long-billed bird. He is gone back to Norway, presumably, and is flying three gun-shots high across the fiords in a sober straightforward fashion, instead of ducking and diving among the trees as is his habit in England. The rustle of feet ceases, and we catch a glimpse of a little bushy brush disappearing round the bole of a great beech tree. Look out for the appearance of two little bright eyes on the other side in a second or two. There they are; are all the squirrels that we see of the female sex that they are so curious, or is there something in the diet of nuts and young pine-shoots that makes them inveterate sight-seers? Let us get back to the shooting-path and out of the covert. Stay, what is this print on the soft clay? Surely the slot of a deer, and not only of a deer but of a stag. Let us follow it up and make sure. Yes, a stag beyond all doubt; the footprint will hold all four fingers of our hand, and must be three inches wide at the heel,—a good stag. Here on deeper ground we can trace the mark of his dew-claws, blunt and divergent; the claws of the hind-feet are uneven too, and the slot of each hind-foot falls little in advance of the fore-foot,—in all cervine probability a very good stag. Here he has left the path and wandered up into the covert, we think we know whither, to a snug corner in a little hollow that is beloved of all wild animals, sunny and windless, a dry spot in wet ground. Seventy years ago the red-deer made it a favourite lair, and now that, after having first narrowly escaped extermination, they again resort to these coverts, they have returned to it once more. If there be a fox in the covert he will be found not

very far from the same spot; and if there be no fox there will be two or three wild cock-pheasants, for they all love that same corner, presumably for the same reason, and community of taste, like misfortune, makes strange bed-fellows. We once saw a hare, a fox, and a brace of hinds emerge in quick succession one after another along the same track, from the head of acombe on Exmoor.

The afternoon is wearing on, and we have two dozen trout, so we must fish down one last favourite reach and turn homeward. One little fellow we secure at the first cast, and then not a fish will move. With an honest and unselfish desire to do justice to the river we flog down the reach a second time, but without result, and turning round find a small boy, with a broad grin and a telegram, standing at our elbow. He has apparently been so deeply interested in our efforts as to forget the object of his mission. "I zeed a sight of fish as I come down," he says without attempting to present the telegram. "Did you, boy? Then don't get going in after them, or you'll get drowned." He grins broader than ever, the young rogue; and we shrewdly suspect that he is a past master of the noble art of groping trout; but we can make allowance for him, for we know by experience how delightful the pursuit can be in the hot summer days when the water is low. No need to open the telegram, for we know too well what is in it. "Here, boy, here's some fish for you. Run home and tell your mother to cook them for your supper." Pray Heaven he may stay in the country, and not become a pale-faced counter-skipper in a town. A last look at his chubby cheeks and a final glance at the water; and good-bye to running streams and healthy faces until September.

POETRY AND MUSIC.

No one can study the present state of music in England without being struck by an apparent paradox. We have, in the record of our literature, some of the finest and noblest of lyric poets: we have a school of living composers which can hold its own against all contemporaries; and yet song is our weak place. When we look to our highest achievements in this form we are too frequently conscious of disappointment; of effort that just misses the true success; of eloquence that somehow is not wholly convincing. Now and again one of our greater artists offers us a lyric masterpiece, but such gifts are as yet too rare to form a tradition. And for the rest, our poetry goes its own way, claiming entire independence for its best work, and only tossing to music its weaker stanzas, while our music either joins unequal alliance with verse that was never meant for it, or, if it be of lesser mould, parts with its courage and sinks to the companionship of some mechanical librettist.

At a time when English music is beginning once more to attract the ears of Europe, this incongruity is a matter of serious importance. We cannot present ourselves to the countrymen of Goethe and Beethoven, of Schumann and Heine, with an art which is manifestly one-sided and imperfect. Indeed there are already signs that our position is growing untenable. The old drawing-room ballad is as dead as Thomas Haynes Bayly. The festival cantata is becoming a byword. And, as a climax, a popular man of letters enters into the fray and tells us that "like most poets

he himself detests the sister art and knows nothing about it;" and that the natural explanation of the breach between the two "is not flattering to musical people." So, while the attack is preparing upon every side, it may be of service to inquire into the history of the quarrel, and to see whether some admissible terms of peace can be suggested.

This is not the place for any discussion as to the relative artistic value of vocal and instrumental music, even if such a discussion were profitable or possible. But it is essential to notice at the outset that vocal music is by its very nature a composite art made up of two disparate factors, and that its success is attained not only by the perfection of its constituent elements, but in an even higher degree by their proper balance and interrelation. Again, the two arts that have been so conjoined are widely different in condition and character. Poetry, as compared with music, is definite and precise in meaning: it appeals to the reason first, to the emotions afterwards; and the proof, if proof were needed, may be found in that disastrous heresy preached by Edgar Poe and sedulously maintained by his French followers. Once let the poet lose his grip upon rational significance, once let him find his ideal in vague indeterminate emotion, or, worse still, in mere collocation of sound, and he has started upon a downward path at the end of which he will find M. Stéphane Mallarmé lamenting because "*La Pénultième est morte.*" On the other hand music, however suggestive, is essentially inarticulate, and it finds its true artistic function in a supre-

macy of pure form which the highest verse can never hope to rival. Not all the melody of Tennyson or Heine or Alfred de Musset, not all the native wood-notes of Shakespeare or the stately measures of Milton, can charm us with such consummate mastery of tone and rhythm as we find in the tunes of Schubert and Brahms and Beethoven. As a natural consequence, when the two arts are brought together they must each be content to counterbalance gain with loss. The one will retain its sweetness and significance, but will sacrifice a little of its precision; the other will give full rein to its emotional force, but will thereby lose something of its formal perfection. In a word, the laws of both will be modified by an equitable compromise, and will so grant its own territory and its own legislation to the border-kingdom of song.

Of this kingdom, during the earliest times into which it is pertinent to inquire, the poet seems to have held the government. In the few examples of Greek song which have been preserved to us the music appears to follow the verse with entire subordination; it hardly does more than emphasise and intensify the rise and fall of the reciting voice. No doubt our instances are not of the best period; no doubt there are many passages in Plato and Aristotle which still await an explanation; but all the evidence that we possess points to the belief that music had not as yet risen to the full dignity of comradeship, and that poetry had still the predominating influence. Indeed the very imperfection of the record is itself an important piece of testimony. If we compare our knowledge of the Greek poets with our knowledge of the Greek musicians we shall feel but little uncertainty as to their

respective places in the history of art.

After Greece came one of Bacon's *eremi et vastitates*, barely occupied by a few anecdotes and some half score of theoretical tracts and commentaries. Under the rule of the medieval Church the story is resumed with an entire change of condition. The practice of music followed from the time of Dunstable to that of Palestrina was altogether different from that which we attribute to the Greeks: it disregarded dramatic expression; it left the growth of lyric melody to the profane and unauthorised efforts of troubadours and *trouvères*; it concentrated its whole attention upon the elaboration and development of vocal counterpoint. Possibly this movement originated in a feeling of reverence. The ecclesiastical composers had to deal, in the first instance, with the sublimest and most sacred of all texts, and they may have thought that it was in some sense irreligious to deck the words with any noticeable display of human emotion. In any case the tradition soon began to degenerate. Sobriety passed into indifference, indifference into total apathy; until at last the voice was treated merely as an instrument and the meaning of its speech was almost obliterated. If the tune of a popular song offered some opening for contrapuntal ingenuity, the song was borrowed, words and all, to serve as the *canto fermo* for a Mass: and thus one member of the choir would be rousing the cathedral echoes with a tavern-catch while his fellows were engaged upon their devotions. No doubt the practice became too great a scandal for even apathy to endure, and church-music, threatened by a Papal prohibition, was only saved by the reforms of Palestrina; but the very existence of such a system is

conclusive testimony. The words of the Mass service must have lost their significance altogether before the public opinion of a religious age could have tolerated such desecration. And in Palestrina, though the gravity and dignity of the service were restored, there is very little attempt to adapt the melodies to the various requirements of the text. It is still a disputed question how far his work may be regarded as expressive, and how far it may be summed up as a magnificent edifice of pure beauty in sound; but at least any decision on the matter must take account of the famous Lamentations, in which the words *Incipit Lamentatio Jeremie Prophetæ*, and the names of the Hebrew initial letters, *Aleph, Beth, Gimel* and so on, are treated in precisely the same manner as the most impassioned utterances of the chapters which follow. A composer who can bring tears to our eyes with the word *Vau* is certainly not bound by any precise limitations on the score of meaning.

Meantime the same plan was adopted in the madrigal. At first there seems to have been some equality of collaboration, but before long the poet began to find that his most delicate fancies were being crushed out of all recognition by contrapuntal uniformity, and so gave up the partnership in disgust and left the task of libretto-making to the humbler and less exacting members of the craft. So, as the music of the madrigals improved, the verse steadily declined, until the climax of absurdity was reached in the following example preserved, for the admiration of posterity, in Percy's *RELICQUES OF ANCIENT BRITISH POETRY*:

Thule, the period of Cosmographie,

Doth vaunt of Hecla, whose sulphureous
fire

Doth melt the frozen clime and thaw the
skie,

Trinacrian Ætna's flames ascend not hier :

These things seeme wondrous, yet more
wondrous I,
Whose heart with feare doth freeze, with
love doth fry.

The Andalusian merchant that returns
Laden with cutchinele and china dishes,
Reports in Spaine how strangely Fogo
burnes

Amidst an ocean full of flying fishes :
These things seeme wondrous, yet more
wondrous I,
Whose heart with feare doth freeze, with
love doth fry.

Imagine a party of sane human beings standing up to sing about "Thule the period of Cosmographie." Assuredly it is sometimes true that *ce qui est trop sot pour être dit on le chante*.

In 1600 came the Florentine revolution, the ostensible aim of which was to restore the Greek ideal of dramatic expression. On such a quest it was necessary that poet and musician should again join hands, and thus the movement, apart from its technical interest in the history of the modern scale, is specially important as the peace-maker of a much needed reconciliation. Monteverde in Italy, Lulli in France, began once more to give adequate recognition to the poetic claims; and England, though she wrote little music for the theatre, offered her own contribution in that superb array of lyric song which lasts from Ford and Dowland to Henry Lawes and Purcell. Yet during this period the balance was not always maintained. There were still some illiterate composers, with no mind for poetry and no ear for verse, barbarians in the art, who overran the country in mere wantonness of ravage; and when opera itself degenerated the breach was once more established, and the quarrel broke out with renewed vigour. Addison tried libretto-writing and failed; Goldoni tried it and gave it up in despair; music began to devote more attention to instrumental forms; poetry left off singing and took to

criticising life; once more the border-kingdom fell in danger of a double secession and saw its government passing into the hands of the undistinguished multitude.

From this it was partly rescued by the accession of Handel. But Handel, though, when he took the trouble, he was strong enough to maintain an equal administration, yet even in oratorio had his occasional moments of laxity, and throughout his long reign did very little for the lyric. Sometimes he transferred to one text music that had been originally composed for another, and so refuted in his own case any doctrine of a pre-established harmony. Sometimes he constructed a whole song,—first part, second part, and the inevitable *da capo*,—out of a single quatrain, repeating the words till their very sound was wearisome and their meaning lost in a tangle of reiterated clauses. In short, for all his power of vivid and picturesque expression, a power unsurpassed, perhaps, by any of his contemporaries, he was yet content to rule by conventional method, and only conceded as an occasional act of grace what, in the ideal commonwealth, poetry ought to claim as an inalienable right.

So there grew up in England a hopelessly inartistic fashion of regarding the tune as paramount and the words as of no importance. Our public listened complacently to foreign languages which it did not even pretend that it understood, or followed them in translations which it would have found itself wholly incompetent to parse. And the fashion has not yet entirely passed away. We still accept inarticulate singers and unknown tongues without any thought that the value of the song is thereby impaired to us. We still accept translations which it would be flattery to describe as doggerel, not because they are the best that we can get, but be-

cause we do not realise that there is anything amiss with them. Take Haydn's CREATION for example. During the better part of a century England has been tolerating a libretto of which the following may be given as a specimen :

The Heavens are telling the glory of God,
The wonder of His work displays the firmament.

To day that is coming speaks it the day,
The night that is gone to following night.
In all the lands resounds the word,
Never unperceived, ever understood.

This is bad enough in oratorio and opera, when the attention is divided among several points of interest; it is a thousand times worse when it appears, as it soon began to appear, in the closer concentration of lyric song. No wonder if our poets came away dissatisfied; no wonder if they concluded that anything was good enough for musical treatment. And when our dark age came and music itself was looked upon as a foreign import, both elements alike began to decay and to infect each other with a fatal taint of corruption.

On the Continent a better state of things was inaugurated by Gluck and carried on by the great masters of Germany and Austria. In some of Haydn's canzonets the balance is adequately maintained: then came Mozart's VEILCHEN, then Beethoven, then the Romantic school which gave due equality to the poet and brought song to the highest consummation that it has yet attained. But meanwhile the tide ebbed away from England, and its flood is but now returning. During the most active and strenuous period in all musical history our own art was virtually in abeyance; we held aloof from the struggle, we looked upon the leaders of advance with an unintelligent suspicion, and we paid the penalty not only by loss of repute, but by the heavier loss of power and

opportunity. And now that our musicians are once more resuming the place which they held before the death of Purcell, it is only to find that the poets have forgotten the old terms of agreement, and have begun to set up new customs of their own. There is probably no lyric verse in the world so difficult to set to music as that of our English contemporaries; it has been written without thought of the composer, without regard to his special claims and requirements; it is too individual, too self-centred, to ask or admit the aid of the collaborator. In a word, though much must be allowed for particular conditions of character and temperament, one proximate reason of our failure in song is the present divergence between English music and English poetry; and of this one ultimate reason may be found in our fathers' maintenance of a bad musical tradition.

Now it is clearly best, as a matter of ideal, that the two elements in song should both be of the same age and of the same country. For in the first place art depends in some degree upon national characteristics, and is itself the purer for the purity of its lineage; and in the second place there have been successive stages in musical as in poetic expression, and it undoubtedly makes for unity that the two should pass through these stages together. Schubert, no doubt, occurs as an exception, but Schubert's whole position in music is exceptional. Schumann, Franz and Brahms are at their highest as song-writers when they are setting the poets of their own people; so are Grieg and Dvorák, so are Gounod and Jensen and Hans Sommer. It is therefore only a partial solution of the problem if we bid our composers seek alliance from France and Germany, or even from our own lyric masters of the Stuart period. In the former case the music, to be congruous, will

take a foreign tinge: in the latter it will be touched with archaism; and both alike will give us a sense of unreality that is fatal to art as a living force. With the Bible, with Shakespeare, the case is different; they have both grown up afresh in each successive generation and are as much a part of our own life as of our forefathers'. But the Bible lies beyond the limits of the present question; with much of Shakespeare we have been already forestalled, and our music has learned a different language from that known to Herrick and Suckling. It is to our own contemporaries, to Tennyson and Rossetti and Mr. Swinburne, that we should look for aid, and it is here, by the irony of circumstance, that aid is most unattainable.

In illustrating this point it is important not to confuse the issue by reference to our great choral compositions. Choral writing has its own special laws and characteristics, its own special qualities of mass and volume, and no inference can be drawn from it to the purely personal feeling of the lyric. It is no answer, therefore, to quote the magnificent work which Dr. Parry has done with Pope and Milton, or even such examples of noble achievement as *THE LOTUS-EATERS*, or *THE REVENGE*, or the *ODE TO ETON*. It is of lyric song that we are speaking; it is in lyric song that our art is, on the whole, most deficient. Every one remembers the sense of expectation which heralded the Tennyson volume a few years ago, and the bitter disappointment which ran through England on its appearance. Here were a score of poems written by Tennyson set by some of the greatest of our composers, and there was hardly a true song among them. *Μία ἐκ πολλῶν οὐκ ἀπόμουςος*; the rest were either preoccupied with some technical problem, or clearly over-

weighted by an unequal partnership. It would be hardly possible to find a more striking instance of our national disability.

On the causes, so far as they spring from the melodic side, we have already touched. They arise partly from a tradition of indifference, partly from its natural complement, a divergence of musical energy into directions other than lyric. But poetry itself has laid obstacles in the way of return. Allowed too little by a past generation, it is now claiming too much, and challenging the composer with difficulties which even the highest genius is not always adequate to surmount. In the first place the best English verse has come to exhibit a peculiar kind of flexibility to which no exact parallel can be found in the art of other nations. It relies mainly upon great variety of stress and accent, upon an extremely free treatment of the laws of scansion, upon a balance of rhythm in which there is as little as possible of exact recurrence. An extreme instance may be seen in those exquisite lines of Keats which were selected by a writer in *THE QUARTERLY REVIEW* as examples of bad prosody; and though the stupidity of the criticism has passed into a proverb, there still remains the fact which it illustrates. But music, though within certain limits it is more flexible than any verse, yet prefers, and indeed almost requires, that its lyric stanza should be marked by some definite recurrences of beat, particularly at the end of the clause where our verse is least inclined to grant them. A poet, for example, will rhyme the word *sky* with the word *silently*, and deliberately choose the rhyme because of its variety of stress. The musician can hardly follow him without breaking the entire design of the melody. Of course in declamatory song this difficulty does not appear,

and even in lyric song it is not always insuperable, but none the less it exists, and it is particularly noticeable in our own country. Again the frequent *enjambement* of the lines, which gives to English verse a special characteristic of beauty, itself affords a new problem to the composer. Shelley's poem "When passion's trance is overpast" would require very deft handling before it could be fitted to the exigencies of the musical stanza.

So far, however, the solution is merely a matter of skill. But a more serious question remains. It must be remembered that song is a combination of two arts, in which each must exercise its own function and must respect the office of the other. In the ideal lyric, such as those of Heine and Schumann, the poet draws an outline which the musician colours; and where they are in perfect sympathy there will be perfect unity of result. But if the one goes on to complete the picture, if he prescribes every *nuance* and every detail, there is no collaboration possible, for nothing is left to the other but complete subservience. There will never be an adequate setting of the "Bugle Song" in *THE PRINCESS*, not because the verse is too musical, for such a plea is a contradiction in terms, but because the poem is too full. What is the composer to do with such a consummate line as,

Blow, bugle, answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying—?

Shall he follow the suggestion of the words? He is but echoing the echoes. Shall he disregard it? He has missed the poet's meaning. The whole field has been occupied already, and if he claim a share of the tillage he must take station as a serf.

It is not pretended that this is true of all our best lyric poetry. If it were we should not have the few masterpieces of song that have been

given us, to name two examples, by Dr. Parry and Dr. Stanford. But it is true in a large number of cases, and wherever it is true, song in any real sense of the term is almost impossible. When *CROSSING THE BAR* was published, more than one of our composers took the poem in hand, and produced a set of *tours de force* of which some were brilliant and some were creditable, and not one was wholly satisfactory. The four stanzas have already attained finality and there is nothing left to add. The same holds good, though in varying degree, with our other great poets of the present age. Browning may almost be put out of consideration, he is no more a singer than his own Pacchiarotto: Rossetti often presents insuperable difficulties of phrase; and though Mr. William Morris and Mr. Swinburne come nearer to the musician's ideal, since they love those broad lines of emotion which it is the function of his art to follow and illustrate, yet the former occasionally forgets that he is writing in the nineteenth century, while the latter, like Keats and Shelley, will only respond to certain musical moods. It is a far cry from even the most adaptable of our lyrics to *WIDMUNG* or *FRÜHLINGSNACHT* or *DU BIST WIE EINE BLUME*.

This bare statement of cause and effect should not be pressed to the extremity of a hostile criticism. Song, in spite of M. de Banville, no more covers the whole of poetry than the whole of music; it is but a province of march-land, ceded from the territory of two separate empires, and governed by the representatives of a joint administration. On either hand lie wide expanses that spread from the near frontiers of romance and elegy and dance-measure to the remoter regions of drama and epic, of sonata

and symphony. In them the artist has free choice to take up his habitation: one may devote himself to the service of pure tone, another to the methods and ideals of pure literature; and, if a man does the best work for which his genius fits him, it is idle that we should complain because he has wrought it on this or that side of a particular border-line. There is no more reason for demanding that every lyric should be a song than for demanding that every play should be an opera; indeed the poet will often speak with a fuller meaning if he be bound by no restrictions than those of his own art. At the same time song is a possession that we would not willingly forego; and song is neither music nor poetry, but both together. The two elements are combined as gold and silver were fused in the electrum, each, it may be, losing some feature of its own beauty, each bearing its part in a result that is worth the sacrifice. And the whole contention of the present paper is that in our English song we should require true gold and true silver, and that we should not rest satisfied with the substitution of a baser metal.

Yet recently our choice has lain, for the most part, between base metal and imperfect fusion. In many forms of expression we have learned to rival Germany, in song we are still far behind her; and the reason is to be found less in the weakness of our music than in the alienation of our poetry. If we have no Heine we can have no Schumann; the future of our song is a matter in which both arts are equally concerned. It only remains that each should more fully recognise the requirements of the other, and should so join in a common cause, of which there already stands over-sea a living example and illustration.

A GARDEN OF DREAMS.

Ghosts—ghosts—the sapphirine air
 Teams with them even to the gleaming ends
 Of the wild day-spring ! Ghosts,
 Everywhere—everywhere !

I THINK there is nothing fraught with so pathetic a burden as the atmosphere of a college which has gown gray with years and memories. Other remnants of antiquity, other links to bind us to a far distant past, have all a less penetrating influence, and seem to hold us by a shadowy and attenuated claim. We look on the domestic architecture of our ancestors with only a vague wonder what manner of men they were who built those houses and dwelt in them. The footprints left in these places are very faint ; the vicissitudes that have been at work here, to sever the connection between us and the generations whose impressions we would fain gather up, have been so many, can only be so imperfectly traced, that we seem to be looking on some stranded survival of an epoch wholly forgotten, about which we can only wonder, with which we are not in the slightest degree in touch. A castle, which is perhaps become a mere show-place, can at most be put to any vital use by sheer anachronism that is not very potent to kindle our imaginations. Great cathedrals, historic churches, though we still make a shift to worship in them, strike us with a chill sense of incongruity. We might as well be bowing down in a heathen temple. They were reared by men of another spirit than ours, of other hopes and fears and beliefs, for another ceremonial and worship. Changes, too numerous almost to allow of a bare record, have intervened between

us and the traditions which hallowed them. Such a feeling, more than a neglectful temper or pure bad taste, has been the prompter in our crude and fatal restorations.

But it is far otherwise within the college's austere pale. There the primitive traditions have struck in their roots with a tenacity which seems to promise that both shall be coeval in duration. Dynasties have been set up and fallen ; Masters and Deans have come and gone, as transiently as the forest leaves or a season's snows ; Charity Commissioners have done their worst ; and we still hold by a manner of life intelligibly akin to that of the earliest members of our body. The most practical, utilitarian student who passes carelessly through the time-worn court, between, perhaps, the laboratories and the sports of the river, is still bound to a past (of which he may know or reck nothing) by simple usages of hall and chapel and a discipline which he despises or revolts from.

Collegiate life thus naturally is fuller of memories, vibrates with keener sympathies as between us and the silent centuries. Yet, in recalling this, we exhaust not one half of its significance. The generations of a college are so much more numerous than any other generations ; a mere score of years there must leave behind them a voluminous history. How much more, then, the years that are to be counted by hundreds ! And these are generations of youth, for the

old gray walls, like granite rocks washed by summer seas, are ever being bathed, as it were, by the ebb and flow of a perpetually rejuvenated life. Nowhere can so many splendid dreams have been dreamed, so many ideals have shaped themselves, so many romances been acted, in thought, at least, as at a great university. The very airs of antiquity in its precincts come rustling down to us with prophetic intimations; every hint of the past is implicated with the future, a future, alas, never to fulfil itself upon this earth! For the organic nature, one might almost say of the atmosphere, is compacted of the enthusiastic purposes and vaticinations of young and ardent natures perished so long ago.

It is doubtless a salutary and wholesome thing that the strenuous exercises of the body and a constant preoccupation blind the undergraduate to the secret presences among which he moves. The Paddock, when it is full of flannel-clad tennis-players, noisily demonstrative, is not the most likely spot for dreaming dreams or seeing visions in. When the courts re-echo with the tramp of men returning from the football-fields, he would be a most impracticable visionary, whose thoughts could detach themselves, for a backward excursion, from the so concrete, urgent present. But in the very depth and midmost solitude of a vacation, when every window with blinds drawn down has presented a blank and meaningless face, or a single shame-faced lamp has twinkled from some casemate in some high-shouldered gable that loses itself in the roof, then, as I have stood idle under some archway, or paced listlessly along, half unconsciously noting, in the "shining, sensitive silver" of the moon, the silhouettes of towers and vanes and twisted chimneys upon the grass, then could I swear that the unsubstantial form of reverend doctor

or painful scholar, in robes of a long-passed fashion, with hushed and meditative step, and countenance averted, downcast, has brushed by me, intent on keeping some mysterious tryst.

But I think it is rather in the gardens and avenues and unfrequented walks that one is most awake to these influences. Cloisters and courts and towers have about them a certain solidity and power of resistance which render them slow to give or take impressions. We think of the founder, of the architect who planned and the builder who wrought, of those others, perhaps, who cautiously or too hastily repaired. Yes, we are led to think of those who raised the theatre; but of all those actors, so young and impressionable, and therefore so impressive, who here played their best, and some of them their only parts, of these we are but faintly reminded.

Nature is so much more plastic than the works of men's hands. She takes something from every contact to which she is exposed. Impression follows impression, but the first that was sealed is as whole and secure as the last. Surely it is not a misleading fancifulness that bids us feel in the character of a landscape some subtle intimation of those who used to love to look upon it? Is it mere credulity to believe that something of the spiritual being of the master lurks in the music others draw from the *Anati* with which, in his lifetime, he held great audiences entranced?

I have haunted the Backs on many a morning in autumn, when there was nothing to disturb the tenor of my solitary broodings. The dew lay bright and sparkling with a hundred prismatic colours on the grass. The yellow leaves, crisp and crackling under my feet, sent up a pungent, wholesome smell. The river lapped lazily among the alders, slid

gracefully under the bridges. There was a rosy flush on the gray pinnacles of King's College chapel. The freshness of the morning and the chilly breath of the waning season together wrought on me with such an effect as to seem to recall, with a kind of intimate connection between themselves and the thing which they suggested, the most appropriate memories of the place, the perpetual springtime of life that is ever burgeoning here, yet ever fading; and half conjuring life into the shapes of the light and wavering mist, half turning my eyes inwards, and furnishing forth my imagination with material drawn from my own heart, I have lived again an infinite number of the lives that made these old colleges bright. The heroic friendships, to be shipwrecked, almost before the cloister was exchanged for the world, on the sunken reef of self-interest; the dreams of love, so much more brilliant than the brightest reality; the bold reforms, the artist's dream, sacrifices all on the world's high places, yet not without a certain rare efficacy in the con-

templation. Surely it was well with the lads who had these dreams, though every one had to perish unfulfilled. Surely it is good for any one to dream them over again.

And in the steady downpour of a February afternoon, when the river and all the Backs are overspread with a pall of heavy, almost impenetrable mist, so that you can scarce see twenty yards before you, and you may listen for half an hour, yet hear no sound but the monotonous splash of the rain; then I have stood and gazed, vacant as the prospect has seemed; and at last a light wind springs up in the tops of the elms, and I vainly struggle to convince myself that there is no other meaning of the sounds which now disturb that oppressive silence, that I am not the frightened witness of a mysterious Drive of the Dead; till it is an unspeakable relief to be interrupted by the noisy advent of men who have spent the rainy afternoon in playing racquets, and are returning homeward through the Backs.

THE FIFTH PICTURE.

LADY TAMWORTH felt unutterably bored. The sensation of lassitude, even in its less acute degrees, was rare with her; for she possessed a nature of so fresh a buoyancy that she was able, as a rule, to extract diversion from any environment. Her mind took impressions with the vivid clearness of a mirror, and also, it should be owned, with a mirror's transient objectivity. To-day, however, the mirror was clouded. She looked out of the window; a level row of gray houses frowned at her across the street. She looked upwards; a gray pall of cloud swung over the roof-tops. The interior of the room appeared to her even less inviting than the street. It was the afternoon of the first drawing-room, and a *debutante* was exhibiting herself to her friends. She stood in the centre, a figure from a Twelfth-Night cake, amidst a babble of congratulations, and was plainly occupied in a perpetual struggle to conceal her moments of enthusiasm beneath a crust of deprecatory languor.

The spectacle would have afforded choice entertainment to Lady Tamworth, had she viewed it in the company of a sympathetic companion. Solitary appreciation of the humorous, however, only induced in her a yet more despondent mood. The tea seemed tepid; the conversation matched the tea. Epigrams without point, sallies void of wit, and cynicisms innocent of the sting of an apt application floated about her on a ripple of unintelligent laughter. A phrase of Mr. Dale's recurred to her mind, "Hock and seltzer with the sparkle out of it;" so he had stigmatised the style

and she sadly thanked him for the metaphor.

There was, moreover, a particular reason for her discontent. Nobody realised the presence of Lady Tamworth, and this unaccustomed neglect shot a barbed question at her breast. "After all why should they?" She was useless, she reflected; she did nothing, exercised no influence. The thought however was too painful for lengthened endurance; the very humiliation of it produced the antidote. She remembered that she had at last persuaded her lazy Sir John to stand for Parliament. Only wait until he was elected! She would exercise an influence then. The vision of a *salon* was miraged before her, with herself in the middle deftly manipulating the destinies of a nation.

"Lady Tamworth!" a voice sounded at her elbow.

"Mr. Dale!" She turned with a sudden sprightliness. "My guardian angel sent you."

"So bad as that?"

"I have an intuition." She paused impressively upon the word.

"Never mind!" said he soothingly. "It will go away."

Lady Tamworth glared, that is, as well as she could; nature had not really adapted her for glaring. "I have an intuition," she resumed, "that this is what the suburbs mean." And she waved her hand comprehensively.

"They are perhaps a trifle excessive," he returned. "But then you needn't have come."

"Oh yes! Clients of Sir John." Lady Tamworth sighed and sank with a weary elegance into a chair. Mr.

Dale interpreted the sigh. "Ah! A wife's duties," he began.

"No man can know," she interrupted, and she spread out her hands in pathetic forgiveness of an over-exacting world. Her companion laughed brutally. "You *are* rude!" she said and laughed too. And then, "Tell me something new!"

"I met an admirer of yours to-day."

"But that's nothing new." She looked up at him with a plaintive reproach.

"I will begin again," he replied submissively. "I walked down the Mile-End road this morning to Sir John's jute-factory."

"You fail to interest me," she said with some emphasis.

"I am so sorry. Good-bye!"

"Mr. Dale!"

"Yes!"

"You may, if you like, go on with the first story."

"There is only one. It was in the Mile-End road I met the admirer—Julian Fairholm."

"Oh!" Lady Tamworth sat up and blushed. However, Lady Tamworth blushed very readily.

"It was a queer incident," Mr. Dale continued. "I caught sight of a neck-tie in a little dusty shop-window near the Pavilion Theatre. I had never seen anything like it in my life; it fairly fascinated me, seemed to dare me to buy it."

The lady's foot began to tap upon the carpet. Mr. Dale stopped and leaned critically forward.

"Well! Why don't you go on?" she asked impatiently.

"It's pretty," he reflected aloud.

The foot disappeared demurely into the seclusion of petticoats. "You exasperate me," she remarked. But her face hardly guaranteed her words. "We were speaking of ties."

"Ah, the tie wasn't pretty. It was

of satin, bright yellow with blue spots. And an idea struck me; yes, an idea! Sir John's election colours are yellow, his opponent's blue. So I thought the tie would make a tactful present, symbolical (do you see?) of the state of parties in the constituency."

He paused a second time.

"Well?"

"I went in and bought it."

"Well?"

"Julian Fairholm sold it to me."

Lady Tamworth stared at the speaker in pure perplexity. Then all at once she understood and the blood eddied into her cheeks. "I don't believe it!" she exclaimed.

"His face would be difficult to mistake," Mr. Dale objected. "Besides I had time to assure myself, for I had to wait my turn. When I entered the shop, he was serving a woman with baby-linen. Oh yes! Julian Fairholm sold me the tie."

Lady Tamworth kept her eyes upon the ground. Then she looked up. She struck the arm of her chair with her closed fist and cried in a quick petulance, "How dare he?"

"Exactly what I thought," answered her companion smoothly. "The colours were crude by themselves, the combination was detestable. And he an artist too!" Mr. Dale laughed pleasantly.

"Did he speak to you?"

"He asked me whether I would take a packet of pins instead of a farthing."

"Ah, don't," she entreated, and rose from her chair. It might have been her own degradation of which Mr. Dale was speaking.

"By the way," he added, "I was so taken aback that I forgot to present the tie. Would you?"

"No! No!" she said decisively and turned away. But a sudden notion checked her. "On second thoughts,

I will ; but I can't promise to make him wear it."

The smile which sped the words flickered strangely upon quivering lips and her eyes shone with anger. However the tie changed hands, and Lady Tamworth tripped down stairs and stepped into her brougham. The packet lay upon her lap and she unfolded it. A round ticket was enclosed, and the bill. On the ticket was printed, *A Present from Zedediah Moss*. With a convulsion of disgust she swept the parcel on to the floor. "How dare he?" she cried again, and her thoughts flew back to the brief period of their engagement. She had been just Kitty Arlton in those days, the daughter of a poor sea-captain but dowered with the compensating grace of personal attractions. Providence had indisputably designed her for the establishment of the family fortunes ; such at all events was the family creed, and the girl herself felt no inclination to doubt a faith which was backed by the evidence of her looking-glass. Julian Fairholm at that time shared a studio with her brother, and the acquaintance thus begun ripened into an attachment and ended in a betrothal. For Julian, in the common prediction, possessed that vague blessing, a future. It is true the common prediction was always protected by a saving clause : "If he could struggle free from his mysticism." But none the less his pictures were beginning to sell, and the family displayed a moderate content. The discomposing appearance of Sir John Tamworth, however, gave a different complexion to the matter. Sir John was rich, and had besides the confident pertinacity of success. In a word, Kitty Arlton married Sir John.

Lady Tamworth's recollections of the episode were characteristically vague ; they came back to her in pieces like disconnected sections of a wooden puzzle. She remembered that

she had written an exquisitely pathetic letter to Fairholm "when the end came," as she expressed it ; and she recalled queer scraps of the artist's talk about the danger of forming ties. "New ties," he would say, "mean new duties, and they hamper and clog the will." Ah yes, the will ; he was always holding forth about that and here was the lecture finally exemplified ! He was selling baby-linen in the Mile-End road. She had borne her disappointment, she reflected, without any talk about will. The thought of her self-sacrifice even now brought the tears to her eyes ; she saw herself wearing her orange-blossoms in the spirit of an Iphigenia.

Sections of the puzzle, however, were missing to Lady Tamworth's perceptions. For, in fact, her sense of sacrifice had been mainly artificial, and fostered by a vanity which made the possession of a broken romance seem to pose her on a notable pedestal of duty. What had really attracted her to Julian was the evidence of her power shown in the subjugation of a being intellectually higher than his compeers. It was not so much the man she had cared for, as the sight of herself in a superior setting ; a sure proof whereof might have been found in a certain wilful pleasure which she had drawn from constantly impelling him to acts and admissions which she knew to be alien to his nature.

It was some revival of this idea which explained her exclamation, "How dare he?" For his conduct appeared more in the light of an outrage and insult to her than of a degradation of himself. He must be rescued from his position, she determined.

She stooped to pick up the bill from the floor as the brougham swung sharply round a corner. She looked out of the window ; the coachman had turned into Berkeley Square ; in

another hundred yards she would reach home. She hastily pulled the check-string, and the footman came to the door. "Drive down the Mile End-road," she said; "I will fetch Sir John home." Lady Tamworth read the address on the bill. "Near the Pavilion Theatre," Mr. Dale had explained. She would just see the place this evening, she determined, and then reflect on the practical course to be pursued.

The decision relieved her of her sense of humiliation, and she nestled back among her furs with a sigh of content. There was a pleasurable excitement about her present impulse which contrasted very brightly with her recent *ennui*. She felt that her wish to do something, to exert an influence, had been providentially answered. The task, besides, seemed to her to have a flavour of antique chivalry; it smacked of the princess undoing enchantments, and reminded her vaguely of Camelot. She determined to stop at the house and begin the work at once; so she summoned the footman a second time and gave him the address. So great indeed was the charm which her conception exercised over her, that her very indignation against Julian changed to pity. He had to be fitted to the chivalric pattern, and consequently refashioned. Her harlequin fancy straightway transformed him into the romantic lover who, having lost his mistress, had lost the world and therefore, naturally, held the sale of baby-linen on a par with the painting of pictures. "Poor Julian!" she thought.

The carriage stopped suddenly in front of a shuttered window. A neighbouring gas-lamp lit up the letters on the board above it, *Z. Moss*. This unexpected check in the full flight of ardour dropped her to earth like a plummet. And as if to accentuate her disappointment the sur-

rounding shops were aglare with light; customers pressed busily in and out of them, and even on the roadway naphtha-jets waved flauntingly over barrows of sweet-stuff and fruit. Only this sordid little house was dark. "They can't afford to close at this hour," she murmured reproachfully.

The footman came to the carriage door, disdain perceptibly struggling through his mask of impassivity.

"Why is the shop closed?" Lady Tamworth asked.

"The name, perhaps, my lady," he suggested. "It is Friday."

Lady Tamworth had forgotten the day. "Very well," she said sullenly. "Home at once!" However, she corrected herself adroitly: "I mean, of course, fetch Sir John first."

Sir John was duly fetched and carried home jubilant at so rare an attention. The tie was presented to him on the way, and he bellowed his merriment at its shape and colour. To her surprise Lady Tamworth found herself defending the style, and inveighing against the monotony of the fashions of the West End. Nor was this the only occasion on which she disagreed with her husband that evening. He launched an aphorism across the dinner-table which he had cogitated from the report of a divorce-suit in the evening papers. "It is a strange thing," he said, "that the woman who knows her influence over a man usually employs it to hurt him; the woman who doesn't, employs it unconsciously for his good."

"You don't mean that?" she asked earnestly.

"I have noticed it more than once," he replied.

For a moment Lady Tamworth's chivalric edifice showed cracks and rents; it threatened to crumble like a house of cards; but only for a moment. For she merely considered the remark in reference to the future;

she applied it to her present wish to exercise an influence over Julian. The issue of that, however, lay still in the dark, and was consequently imaginable as inclination prompted. A glance at Sir Julian sufficed to finally reassure her. He was rosy and modern, and so plainly incapable of appreciating chivalric impulses. To estimate them rightly one must have an insight into their nature, and therefore an actual experience of their fire; but such fire left traces on the person. Chivalric people were hollow-cheeked with luminous eyes; at least chivalric men were hollow-cheeked, she corrected herself with a look at the mirror. At all events Sir John and his aphorism were beneath serious reflection; and she determined to repeat her journey upon the first opportunity.

The opportunity, however, was delayed for a week and occasioned Lady Tamworth no small amount of self-pity. Here was noble work waiting for her hand, and duty kept her chained to the social oar!

On the afternoon, then, of the following Friday she dressed with what even for her was unusual care, aiming at a complex effect of daintiness and severity, and drove down in a hansom to Whitechapel. She stopped the cab some yards from the shop and walked up to the window. Through the glass she could see Julian standing behind the counter. His hands (she noticed them particularly because he was displaying some cheap skeins of coloured wool) seemed perhaps a trifle thinner and more nervous, his features a little sharpened, and there was a sprinkling of gray in the black of his hair. For the first time since the conception of her scheme Lady Tamworth experienced a feeling of irresolution. With Fairholm in the flesh before her eyes, the task appeared difficult; its reality pressed in upon her, driving a breach through the flimsy wall of her fancies.

She resolved to wait until the shop should be empty, and to that end took a few steps slowly up the street and returned yet more slowly. She looked into the window again; Julian was alone now, and still she hesitated. The admiring comments of two loungers on the kerb concerning her appearance at last determined her, and she brusquely thrust open the door. A little bell jangled shrilly above it and Julian looked up.

"Lady Tamworth!" he said after the merest pause and with no more than a natural start of surprise. Lady Tamworth, however, was too taken aback by the cool manner of his greeting to respond at once. She had forecast the commencement of the interview upon such wholly different lines that she felt lost and bewildered. An abashed confusion was the least that she expected from him, and she was prepared to increase it with a nicely-tempered indignation. Now the positions seemed actually reversed; he was looking at her with a composed attention, while she was filled with embarrassment.

A suspicion flashed through her mind that she had come upon a fool's errand. "Julian!" she said with something of humility in her voice, and she timidly reached out her little gloved hand towards him. Julian took it into the palm of his own and gazed at it with a sort of wondering tenderness, as though he had lighted upon a toy which he remembered to have prized dearly in an almost forgotten childhood. This second blow to her pride quickened in her a feeling of exasperation. She drew her fingers quickly out of his grasp. "What brought you down to this!" She snapped out the words at him; she had not come to Whitechapel to be slighted at all events.

"I have risen," he answered quietly.

"Risen? And you sell baby-linen!"

Julian laughed in pure contentment. "You don't understand," he said. For a moment he looked at her as one debating with himself and then: "You have a right to understand. I will tell you." He leaned across the counter, and as he spoke the eager passion of a devotee began to kindle in his eyes and vibrate through the tones of his voice. "The knowledge of a truth worked into your heart will lift you, eh, must lift you high? But base your life upon that truth, centre yourself about it, till your thoughts become instincts born from it! It must lift you still higher then; ah, how much higher! Well, I have done that. Yes, that's why I am here. And I owe it all to you."

Lady Tamworth repeated his words in sheer bewilderment. "You owe it all to me?"

"Yes," he nodded, "all to you." And with genuine gratitude he added, "You didn't know the good that you had done."

"Ah, don't say that!" she cried.

The bell tinkled over the shop-door and a woman entered. Lady Tamworth bent forward and said hastily, "I must speak to you."

"Then you must buy something; what shall it be?" Fairholm had already recovered his self-possession and was drawing out one of the shelves in the wall behind him.

"No, no!" she exclaimed, "not here; I can't speak to you here. Come and call on me; what day will you come?"

Julian shook his head. "Not at all, I am afraid. I have not the time."

A boy came out from the inner room and began to get ready the shutters. "Ah, it's Friday," she said. "You will be closing soon."

"In five minutes."

"Then I will wait for you. Yes, I will wait for you."

She paused at the door and looked at Julian. He was deferentially waiting on his customer, and Lady Tamworth noticed with a queer feeling of repugnance that he had even acquired the shopman's trick of rubbing the hands. Those five minutes proved for her a most unenviable period. Julian's sentence,—"I owe it all to you"—pressed heavily upon her conscience. Spoken bitterly, she would have given little heed to it; but there had been a convincing sincerity in the ring of his voice. The words, besides, brought back to her Sir John's uncomfortable aphorism and freighted it with an accusation. She applied it now as a search-light upon her jumbled recollections of Julian's courtship, and began to realise that her efforts during that time had been directed thoughtlessly towards enlarging her influence over him. If, indeed, Julian owed this change in his condition to her, then Sir John was right, and she had employed her influence to his hurt. And it only made her fault the greater that Julian was himself unconscious of his degradation. She commenced to feel a personal responsibility commanding her to rescue him from his slough, which was increased moreover by a fear that her persuasions might prove ineffectual. For Julian's manner pointed now to an utter absence of feeling so far as she was concerned.

At last Julian came out to her. "You will leave here," she cried impulsively. "You will come back to us, to your friends!"

"Never," he answered firmly.

"You must," she pleaded; "you said you owed it all to me."

"Yes."

"Well, don't you see? If you stay here, I can never forgive myself; I shall have ruined your life."

"Ruined it?" Julian asked in a tone of wonder. "You have made it." He stopped and looked at Lady Tamworth in perplexity. The same perplexity was stamped upon her face. "We are at cross-purposes, I think," he continued. "My rooms are close here. Let me give you some tea, and explain to you that you have no cause to blame yourself."

Lady Tamworth assented with some relief. The speech had an odd civilised flavour which contrasted pleasantly with what she had imagined of his mode of life.

They crossed the road and turned into a narrow side-street. Julian halted before a house of a slovenly exterior, and opened the door. A bare rickety staircase rose upwards from their feet. Fairholm closed the door behind Lady Tamworth, struck a match (for it was quite dark within this passage), and they mounted to the fourth and topmost floor. They stopped again upon a little landing in front of a second door. A wall-paper of a cheap and offensive pattern, which had here and there peeled from the plaster, added, Lady Tamworth observed, a paltry air of tawdriness to the poverty of the place. Julian fumbled in his pocket for a key, unlocked the door, and stepped aside for his companion to enter. Following her in, he lit a pair of wax candles on the mantelpiece and a brass lamp in the corner of the room. Lady Tamworth fancied that unawares she had slipped into fairyland; so great was the contrast between this retreat and the sordid surroundings amidst which it was perched. It was furnished with a daintiness, and almost a feminine luxury. The room, she could see, was no more than an oblong garret; but along one side mouse-coloured curtains fell to the ground in folds from the angle where the sloping roof met the wall; on the

other a cheerful fire glowed from a hearth of white tiles and a kettle sang merrily upon the hob. A broad couch, piled with silk cushions, occupied the far end beneath the window, and the feet sank with a delicate pleasure into a thick velvety carpet. In the centre a small inlaid table of cedar wood held a silver tea-service. The candlesticks were of silver also, and cast in a light and fantastic fashion. The solitary discord was a black easel funereally draped.

Julian prepared the tea, and talked while he prepared it. "It is this way," he began quietly. "You know what I have always believed; that the will was the man, his soul, his life, everything. Well, in the old days thoughts and ideas commenced to make themselves felt in me, to crop up in my work. I would start on a picture with a clear settled design; when it was finished, I would notice that by some unconscious freak I had introduced a figure, an arabesque, always something which made the whole incongruous and bizarre. I discovered the cause during the week after I received your last letter. The thoughts, the ideas were yours; better than mine perhaps, but none the less death to me."

Lady Tamworth stirred uneasily under a sense of guilt, and murmured a faint objection. Julian shook off the occupation of his theme and handed her some cake, and began again, standing over her with the cake in his hand, and to all seeming unconscious that there was a strain of cruelty in his words. "I found out what that meant. My emotions were mastering me, drowning the will in me. You see, I cared for you so much—then."

A frank contempt stressing the last word cut into his hearer with the keenness of a knife. "You are unkind," she said weakly.

"There's no reproach to you. I have got over it long ago," he replied cheerily. "And you showed me how to get over it; that's why I am grateful. For I began to wonder after that, why I, who had always been on my guard against the emotions, should become so thoroughly their slave. And at last I found out the reason; it was the work I was doing."

"Your work?" she exclaimed.

"Exactly! You remember what Plato remarked about the actor?"

"How should I?" asked poor Lady Tamworth.

"Well, he wouldn't have him in his ideal State because acting develops the emotions, the shifty unstable part of a man. But that's true of art as well; to do good work in art you must feel your work as an emotion. So I cut myself clear from it all. I furnished these rooms and came down here,—to live." And Julian drew a long breath, like a man escaped from danger.

"But why come here?" Lady Tamworth urged. "You might have gone into the country—anywhere."

"No, no, no!" he answered, setting down the cake and pacing about the room. "Wherever else I went, I must have formed new ties, created new duties. I didn't want that; one's feelings form the ties, one's soul pays the duties. No, London is the only place where a man can disappear. Besides I had to do something, and I chose this work, because it didn't touch me. I could throw it off the moment it was done. In the shop I earn the means to live; I live here."

"But what kind of a life is it?" she asked in despair.

"I will tell you," he replied, sinking his tone to an eager whisper; "but you mustn't repeat it, you must keep it a secret. When I am in this room alone at night, the walls widen

and widen away until at last they vanish," and he nodded mysteriously at her. "The roof curls up like a roll of parchment, and I am left on an open platform."

"What do you mean?" gasped Lady Tamworth.

"Yes, on an open platform underneath the stars. And do you know," he sank his voice yet lower, "I hear them at times; very faintly of course,—their songs have so far to travel; but I hear them,—yes, I hear the stars."

Lady Tamworth rose in a whirl of alarm. Before this crazy exaltation, her very desire to pursue her purpose vanished. For Julian's manner even more than his words contributed to her fears. In spite of his homely, emotion was dominant in his expression, swaying his body, burning on his face and lighting his eyes with a fire of changing colours. And every note in his voice was struck within the scale of passion.

She glanced about the room; her eyes fell on the easel. "Don't you ever paint?" she asked hurriedly.

He dropped his head and stood shifting from one foot to the other, as if he was ashamed. "At times," he said hesitatingly; "at times I have to,—I can't help it,—I have to express myself. Look!" He stepped suddenly across the room and slid the curtains back along the rail. The wall was frescoed from floor to ceiling.

"Julian!" Lady Tamworth cried. She forgot all her fears in face of this splendid revelation of his skill. Here was the fulfilment of his promise.

In the centre four pictures were ranged, the stages in the progress of an allegory, but executed with such masterful craft and of so vivid an intention that they read their message straightway into the heart of one's understanding. Round about

this group, were smaller sketches, miniatures of pure fancy. It seemed as if the artist had sought relief in painting these from the pressure of his chief design. Here, for instance, Day and Night were chasing one another through the rings of Saturn; there a swarm of silver stars was settling down through the darkness to the earth.

"Julian, you must come back. You can't stay here."

"I don't mean to stay here long. It is merely a halting-place."

"But for how long?"

"I have one more picture to complete."

They turned again to the wall. Suddenly something caught Lady Tamworth's eye. She bent forward and examined the four pictures with a close scrutiny. Then she looked back again to Julian with a happy smile upon her face. "You have done these lately?"

"Quite lately; they are the stages of a man's life, of the struggle between his passions and his will."

He began to describe them. In the first picture a brutish god was seated on a throne of clay; before the god a man of coarse heavy features lay grovelling; but from his shoulders sprang a white figure, weak as yet and shadowy, but pointing against the god the shadow of a spear; and underneath was written, "At last he knoweth what he made." In the second, the figure which grovelled and that which sprang from its shoulders were plodding along a high-road at night, chained together by the wrist. The white figure halted behind, the other pressed on; and underneath was written, "They know each other not." In the third the figures marched level, that which had grovelled scowling at its companion; but the white figure had grown tall and strong and watched its companion

with contempt. Above the sky had brightened with the gleam of stars; and underneath was written, "They know each other." In the fourth, the white figure pressed on ahead and dragged the other by the chain impatiently. Before them the sun was rising over the edge of a heath and the road ran straight towards it in a golden line; and underneath was written, "He knoweth his burden."

Lady Tamworth waited when he had finished, in a laughing expectancy. "And is that all?" she asked. "Is that all?"

"No," he replied slowly; "there is yet a further stage. It is unfinished." And he pointed to the easel.

"I don't mean that. Is that all you have to say of these?"

"I think so. Yes."

"Look at me!"

Julian turned wonderingly to Lady Tamworth. She watched him with a dancing sparkle of her eyes. "Now look at the pictures!" Julian obeyed her. "Well," she said after a pause, with a touch of anxiety. "What do you see now?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?" she asked. "Do you mean that?"

"Yes! What should I see?" She caught him by the arm and stared intently into his eyes in a horror of disbelief. He met her gaze with a frank astonishment. She dropped his arm and turned away.

"What should I see?" he repeated.

"Nothing," she echoed with a quivering sadness in her voice. "It is late, I must go."

The white figure in each of those four pictures wore her face, idealised and illumined, but still unmistakably her face; and he did not know it, could not perceive it though she stood by his side! The futility of her errand was proved to her. She drew on her gloves and looking towards the

easel inquired dully, "What stage is that?"

"The last; and it is the last picture I shall paint. As soon as it is completed I shall leave here."

"You will leave?" she asked, paying little heed to his words.

"Yes! The experiment has not succeeded," and he waved a hand towards the wall. "I shall take better means next time."

"How much remains to be done?" Lady Tamworth stepped over to the easel. With a quick spring Julian placed himself in front of it.

"No!" he cried vehemently, raising a hand to warn her off. "No!"

Lady Tamworth's curiosity began to reawaken. "You have shown me the rest."

"I know; you had a right to see them."

"Then why not that?"

"I have told you," he said stubbornly. "It is not finished."

"But when it is finished?" she insisted.

Julian looked at her strangely. "Well, why not?" he said reasoning with himself. "Why not? It is the masterpiece."

"You will let me know when it's ready?"

"I will send it to you; for I shall leave here the day I finish it."

They went down stairs and back into the Mile-End-road. Julian hailed a passing hansom, and Lady Tamworth drove westwards to Berkeley Square.

The fifth picture arrived a week later in the dusk of the afternoon. Lady Tamworth unpacked it herself with an odd foreboding.

It represented an orchard glowing in the noontide sun. From the branches of a tree with lolling tongue and swollen twisted face swung the figure which had grovelled before the god. A broken chain dangled on its wrist, a few links of the chain lay on the grass beneath, and above the white figure winged and triumphant faded into the blue of the sky; and underneath was written, "He freeth himself from his burden."

Lady Tamworth rushed to the bell and pealed loudly for her maid. "Quick!" she cried, "I am going out." But the shrill screech of a newsboy pierced into the room. With a cry she flung open the window. She could hear his voice plainly at the corner of the square. For a while she clung to the sash in a dumb sickness. Then she said quietly: "Never mind! I will not go out after all! I did not know I was so late."

A FORGOTTEN SATIRE.

AN old lady of much vivacity and great literary knowledge was asked, not long ago, whether she had read *CHRYSALE*. The question was put during one of the interludes in a hand at whist, and her answer was brief, but to the point: "Oh, dear, yes, thousands of years ago!" This statement was, to say the least, hyperbolic, as she was only in her eighty-first year. Another, to whom the same question was put, asked whether it were a book on Entomology, from some hazy connection of ideas, as for example, *male Chrysal*, *female Chrysalis*. Indeed the inquiries made of cultured people resembled the questions put in Parliament, and only served to show a more than ministerial ignorance. Yet the story is a good one told with much point and no little force, was extremely popular in its day, and is just as completely forgotten now as if it had truly been written thousands of years ago. Such is the brevity of literary fame.

Of Charles Johnston, the author of *CHRYSALE*, little is known; even the dates of his birth and death are uncertain. An Irishman by birth he is said to have been descended from the Johnstons of Annandale, and Sir Walter Scott, not without a touch of pride, claims him as a fellow-countryman. He had a classical education at Trinity College, Dublin, and on being called to the Bar he came over to practise in England. His deafness, in which as in some other respects he resembled Le Sage, hindered his success, so he turned to the Muse of Literature, and by her kindness he found a subsistence. He was a lively

and sociable man, whose circle of friends included many deeply versed in the mysteries of current politics, which are mysterious only so long as they are current, and when passed are usually found to be purely selfish.

In 1760 *CHRYSALE* was announced in the newspapers as "a dispassionate account of the most remarkable transactions of the present time all over Europe." The book, consisting originally of two volumes, was written for amusement while the author was paying a visit to Lord Mount-Edgcumbe; and it doubtless afforded much more amusement to the author and to his noble host than to the persons whom it describes. Its popularity was instantaneous, and so great that a second and enlarged edition appeared in the same year, and a third in four volumes in 1761. Since that date it has been several times reprinted, till to-day it has almost passed from recollection. Encouraged by his success Johnston published four more works, which are as completely forgotten as they deserve to be. Soon afterwards, in 1782, he sailed for India in the *Brilliant* commanded by Captain Mears, and was shipwrecked off the Joanna Islands. With the captain and a few others he was saved after prolonged hardship, and made his way to Bengal. There he wrote much as "*Oneiropolos*" for the newspapers, of one of which he became joint-proprietor. By investments in property he grew comparatively wealthy, and died about 1800. So much for our author's life.

Nothing need be said of the last four of Johnston's works; *ex nihilo*

nil fit, and they are less than nothing. With dust, and in the cheerful company of bookworms, let them moulder till they too are dust. But with *CHRYSA* the case is different. No historian of the period in which it was written can afford to neglect its spicy pages; no student of the manners of the eighteenth century can pass it by with comfortable scorn. One of the most remarkable works of Le Sage is *LE DIABLE BOITEUX*, which has been irreverently rendered *THE DEVIL ON TWO STICKS*. The Fiend in this guise is a tricky and disagreeable personage, whose habit was to look in through the roof of a house and see what its inhabitants were doing. But so far from keeping his discoveries to himself, he revealed them to somebody not in the least concerned therein,—a method of secrecy much practised by others besides his Satanic Majesty. Whether Johnston had read this book or not is uncertain; but he must have read Dr. Bathurst's *ADVENTURES OF A HALF-PENNY*, which appeared in the forty-third number of *THE ADVENTURER*. The idea of *CHRYSA* appears to be based upon this lively little paper, but the realisation is naturally much more complicated and much longer.

An adept in a state of deep poverty, came to lodge at a chandler's shop in Whitechapel. The garret was the scene of his mephytic sanctuary, and he busied himself in making evil odours as chemists or adepts habitually do. In searching for the Philosopher's Stone he often almost starved himself, till one morning he was found dead in his bed by his anxious landlady to whom he owed a quarter's rent and almost twenty shillings in the shop. He left behind him a manuscript, which the author represents himself as buying and editing, and which contained the narrative of *CHRYSA*, or *THE ADVENTURES OF A*

GUINEA. After much abstinence the adept had been gratified with the apparition of a beautiful figure of golden colour, who proved to be *Chrysal* or the *Spirit of Gold*. Very amusing is the Spirit's account of himself in quotations from John Locke and Bishop Berkeley and Clayton's *ESSAY ON SPIRIT*, which he applies to himself with much serious fooling. He tells the adept that all spirits are bisexual, or monœcious as the botanists would say, but adopt the female as the nobler characteristic, and having described his essence in the exact words of the Berkeleyan School of Philosophers, he proceeds to narrate his adventures.

He was first sent to animate a mass of gold lying beneath the ground in Peru. When he was brought to the light he possessed the power of entering into the heart, and of analysing the motives of him, or her, who had his outward and tangible sign. Hence it will easily be seen what a terrible whip the author held in his hand under the character of *Chrysal*, and he laid it on to good purpose. No attempt will be made here to trace all the Spirit's wanderings, for the very sufficient reason that they occupy more than six hundred closely printed pages. Just so much of the cream will be skimmed as to give the reader a fair idea of the whole work. *Chrysal*, as has been said, first animated a lump of gold in Peru, and after several wanderings in which he did much mischief, he was framed into a guinea. One of the most terrible narratives in the book is that of the Peruvian officer, who ravishes his brother's wife, robs him and murders her, and is yet forgiven and protected by the Jesuit priest on the payment of a large sum of money. The casuistry by which the priest argues is represented with a lurid fidelity, and every crime is condoned

by a series of arguments which would not have disgraced Peter Dens.

Johnston apparently knew much about the military and naval services, and he exposed the chicanery of the chiefs in command and their friends in office with pitiless force. It is true that he named no names; but his descriptions were so exact that the culprits could not fail to recognise their portraits, and he was good enough to present his less discerning friends with a key to the work. When we reflect that Lord Chesterfield, George Whitefield, Samuel Foote, the King, the elder Pitt, General Wolfe, the Duke of Cumberland, Admiral Byng, and John Wilkes are among the persons described, we can easily see how interesting the description of each must have been to the others, and with few exceptions how disagreeable to himself. Lord Chesterfield, for example, Chrystal found in the height, or depth, of gambling, a philosopher in resistance to all passions but this. George Whitefield is mercilessly satirised, and no doubt slandered. He is described as drinking in the society of a well-known pimp and a celebrated procuress, the infamous Mother Douglas, who is rightly called Mother Brimstone. They are waiting for Samuel Foote, or Momus, who satirised Whitefield in his play *THE MINOR* under the name of Squintum, in playful allusion to the obliquity of his vision. Foote is admirably sketched as mimicking each to his or her face, to the huge delight of the rest. The account then becomes libellous. Whitefield so irritated Mother Brimstone that she hurled her glass at his head, wounding his by no means too prepossessing countenance. He bound up his wound, and announced on the following Sunday morning that he would give an account of its origin in the evening, when he naturally had an overflowing congregation, from whom

he took a most satisfactory collection. This is of course a wholly untrue picture of a good man; but the vehemence and earnestness of the preacher had no doubt the appearance of cant to the author.

It is refreshing to turn to a pleasanter picture, and to follow Chrystal into the possession of Frederick the Great. Johnston gives one portrait and Thackeray another of the "little great man." It is not ours to decide which is the truer artist. This much may be said, that our author lived nearer to the times of which he wrote than the immeasurably greater author of BARRY LYNDON, and his portraiture, if not so forcible, is infinitely the more attractive of the two. Chrystal found the King despotic but just, tender in his care of his wounded soldiers but inflexibly stern to offenders. To see the busiest King in Europe ready to listen to any appeals to his justice, and to find him generous and swift to redress every wrong, is to recognise a truly great character. "Temperance, exercise, and serenity of conscience insured his repose; he fell asleep the moment his head touched the pillow, nor awoke till his usually early time of rising next morning, when he returned to the fatigue and perplexity of such a multiplicity of affairs with a clear head and undismayed heart, and soon reduced the confusion of them into such order, as made their execution easy." Such is the description of a clear head and a serene conscience, that may well make the reader pause ere he accepts the account of the ingenious Barry, who appears to be colouring his statements with the luxuriance of an Irish imagination.

A merciless, but not undeserved attack is made on Lord George Sackville, who prevented a victory at Minden by jealousy of his German colleague, if not by a defect still more

unbecoming a soldier. Chrysal speaks with much force of the despicable motives of the English captain, and doubtless represents contemporary public opinion. Soon after this the guinea fell into the hands of a Jesuit. The description of the trickery and untruthfulness of the Order, though caricatured, had some foundation in fact, and one of the first principles of many of its members is thus announced in very bald fashion. "Man is thrown into this world by nature, to obtain his own happiness by every means within his power; this is too sublime a truth for vulgar knowledge, as it would put an end to the delusion by which the wise few keep the herd of mankind in ignorance and subjection." A more unvarnished announcement of the policy of the Order than is contained in this "sublime truth" could not well be desired, though the policy itself is by no means confined to the Jesuits. It is not our business to defend the Society of eminent casuists, who hold that "the end justifies the means," and whose conduct in obedience to this honourable maxim is quite consistent. Suffice it to say that the satire is pointed, and that its point is exceedingly sharp.

Chrysal also passed some time in the service of the Countess of Yarmouth, and a more hateful description of the great Court favourite it would be hard to find. Gold was her passion, and so long as that was fully satisfied, she cared for nothing and for nobody. Her method of prostituting her influence to secure posts for characters worthy or unworthy, and gold for herself, is described in a manner too revolting to be wholly untrue. The reader is delighted to find that this royal ewe-lamb is fleeced to her hide by her agent Abinadab the Jew and his hopeful son.

Passing into the possession of Sir William Johnson, Chrysal gives a

curious description of the North American Indian Commonwealth, over which that eccentric genius presided. It appears to have been a sort of Platonic community in which goods, liberties, and wives were enjoyed in common. The chief set the example in his own person to the increase of his subjects and their devotion to him. Indeed he resembled Béranger's Roi d'Yvetot as he appears in Thackeray's version—

To all the ladies of the land
A courteous king, and kind, was he;
The reason why, you'll understand,
They named him Pater Patriæ.

We cannot determine how far this description is exaggerated; but Sir William's honest plan of dealing with the Indians is told with fine irony. He is made to answer, when bidden to use diplomacy by Lord Howe: "Really, sir, not I! I never was good at devising reasons destitute of truth, in my life; and have entirely forgot the practice since I have conversed with the Americans, who are far from being such fools as they are generally thought to be. Though they have not the advantage of learning, they see by the light of natural reason through all the boasted wiles of policy, and, as they never mean deceit themselves, detest it in others, however speciously disguised; nor ever place confidence a second time, where it has been once abused." Would that all diplomatists could see and be guided by the delicate irony of this plain statement. The lesson is worth learning, though it is perhaps somewhat late in the day to begin to recognise so transparent a fact, that policy need not be synonymous with shuffling.

Chrysal, next in possession of a purser, had a peep into the law-courts, in which a sailor, who had been punished within sight of his shore sued his captain. Mr. Pratt, afterwards Lord Chief Justice, had spoken eloquently

on behalf of his client, when Lord Colville, an "old salt," answered him by the following apposite story. "I have read in a book (for I perceive that common sense signifies nothing here, if not supported by a quotation, it matters not whether to the purpose, or not,) that a certain philosopher having declaimed one day for a considerable length of time before Alexander the Great, at the head of his army, on the duties of a general, the Emperor turned to Parmenio, one of his generals who stood near him, and asked him what he thought of his speech. 'Sire,' answered Parmenio, 'my opinion is, that I never heard a fool talk so learnedly.' I make no application." It was a great rebuff to a man who knew nothing of the subject of his harangue, whether application were made or not. For once the cause of right prevailed, and the great lawyer had nothing to say. About the same time Chrysal passed a harsh judgment on Admiral Byng, and on Henry Fox (the first Lord Holland), whom he accused of giving that unfortunate commander secret instructions. However that may be, Byng met his death by following either the dark lantern of nature or a private commission.

Next the elder Pitt received the guinea, and of him a very noble account is given. David Garrick was soon afterwards introspected by our Spirit, who describes that admirable actor with much force. He tells of the battle of the managers of the theatre against the half-price movement of the mob, which resulted in the wrecking of the scenery and effects, and in the defeat of Beard and Garrick. Little Davy's mode of getting rid of troublesome poets next engaged Chrysal's attention. One tragedy violated the rules of the drama, another was choked by the self-same rules; the plot of a third was laid too much in high life, while that of a

fourth descended too low; this one had too much incident, and the next too little. And so he rid himself of a crowd of poetical nonentities, who were all vain enough to imagine that they could win and wear the dramatic laurel.

The guinea did not, despite Foote's famous joke, remain long in the great actor's possession, but passed soon into the hands of Sir Francis Dashwood, which gives occasion for an account of the notorious orgies at Medenham Abbey, which are sufficiently familiar to all readers versed in the scandalous chronicle of those days to need no recapitulation here.

One of the most pathetic stories of Chrysal's possessors is that of the poor beau whose "belly mourned for the finery of his back," as the Spirit not too delicately puts it. This unhappy wretch covered his outside at the expense of his inside, and for his pains (and the pangs of internal emptiness are unspeakable) was everywhere derided. The Spirit did not stay long with him, and after various adventures fell into the hands of a herald who occupied his leisure in cheating an antiquary. Of his forged inscription and manuscript he says with much triumph: "Upon my life, they look very well. The canker upon this copper, and the smoke upon this parchment are as natural as if they were the work of a thousand years." It is needless to say that his customer added one more to the long list of deluded antiquaries, and paid fifty pounds for what was not worth fifty pence. Sir Walter Scott had read CHRYSAI, and perhaps unconsciously reproduced a few of the traits of the gulled one in *THE ANTIQUARY*. Edie Ochiltree's answer to Mr. Oldbuck about the Pretorium of which he "minded the bigging," will never be forgotten. When Monkbarns read the mystic letters A. D. L. L. as *Agricola Dicavit*

Libens Lubens, his disgust can better be imagined than described at the gaberlunzie's interpretation of "Aiken Drum's Lang Ladle." This scene in its turn appears to have given Dickens the idea of the stone which immortalised Mr. Pickwick. Suffice it to say that Johnston's antiquary entered the manuscript in his collection as, "A very ancient manuscript written by Thomas à Becket in the second century, and found in his tomb at the restoration, proving that Joseph of Arimathea was an English bishop."

Churchill and Wilkes next figure as Chrysal's masters. An attractive picture is painted of the poet, so weak and so strong, so amiable too in his weakness as in his strength. One splendid and characteristic instance of his generosity is narrated, which is too long to be set down in detail here, but its intrinsic probability almost guarantees its truth. The poet relieved a whole family at the expense of half the profit of one of his poems, showing in his liberality a strong difference from his niggardly namesake the first Duke of Marlborough. The whole story of Wilkes and *THE NORTH BRITON* is told with some humour, and severe condemnation, not of what the so-called patriot did, but of the meanness of his motives. The character of Wilkes in all its shallow vivacity and sparkling wit is described with the vigour of Hogarth's well-known portrait; but the author is perhaps less just than the painter to that "inglorious John," who has, however, doubtless won more reputation than he deserved from those patriots who think any stick good enough wherewith to beat a royal whelp,—not that we would suggest any other resemblance between the kingly Guelph and the canine quadruped, save a dogged determination to pursue the wrong course.

Passing often through the fingers of politicians Chrysal, had time and

occasion to observe their trickery. His condemnation of politics is epigrammatic and uncompromising: "They are alike a jumble of villany and blunders." There certainly was truth in this statement at the time in which it was uttered; some cynics are apt to suspect that there is at least a homeopathic dose of truth in it even now. Johnston had had some experience of the party conspirators of his period, and these use similar methods in every age.

Finally the guinea, much clipped, came into the possession of the adept. The Spirit was just on the point of revealing the great secret, when his listener dismissed him by a natural but uncontrollable indiscretion for which the reader must consult the book; and with the death of the adept *THE ADVENTURES OF A GUINEA* come to an end. Such is always the fate of those who are on the point of solving a mystery; something unforeseen is sure to occur, and the secret remains unrevealed. The end comes very suddenly, and so great is the power of the book, that the reader lays it down like *Oliver Twist*, only for very different reasons, hungering for more. The Spirit of Gold has proved himself an admirable story-teller, with just that spice of exaggeration which is useful to set off a good story. The book has no plot; just as money circulates so does, or did, *CHRYSLAL*, and

Full of wise saws and modern instances, he "took up his parable." Sometimes his satire degenerates into fierce declamation, sometimes he is distinguished by rare gleams of polished irony; but all his narratives are interesting, and not the less piquant because in many cases they deal with real persons.

CHRYSLAL is the only work of Johnston's which deserved to live, though its life appears to be gasping out its last breath. It is the Scandalous

Chronicle of its time, and is only the more interesting from that highly improper circumstance. The idea is excellent and the purpose unimpeachable. Whether all the persons attacked could see the merits of the work may well be doubted; that the public were keener-sighted is evident from its by-gone popularity. That it did present a tolerably accurate picture of the habits of the time is abundantly proved by contemporary caricatures, and Scott was evidently well within the mark when he wrote, in 1825: "When all exaggeration has been deducted from this singular work, enough of truth still remains in *CHRYSA* to incline the reader to congratulate himself that the scenes have passed more than half a century before his time." Dr. Johnson's judgment will appeal to all who have read both *LE DIABLE BOITEUX* and *CHRYSA*. "If," says the learned Doctor, "*Le Sage* was a prose *Horace*, *Johnston* was a prose *Juvenal*."

Johnston spreads before the reader a panorama of varied and highly coloured scenes. Gentle and simple, cleric and layman, statesman and harlot, preacher and pimp, all pass in front of him, and each is depicted by a few bold strokes of description. The author uses the Spirit to represent his own views of the iniquities of the time, sometimes, no doubt, distorted, but often painted with painful exact-

ness and merciless vigour. Satires of the past often give truer ideas of history than the narrative of events. The backstairs, by which politicians and others climb to pre-eminence, are always a matter of tender interest to their successors; there is further a reprehensible tendency in mankind to love to see others mauled so long as they are spectators of the play. Those, too, who have the pluck to take up the whip, and to lay it on where the cuts will tell, deserve much respect for their bravery. Among these the author of *CHRYSA* merits no mean place. Some of his judgments are, as we have said, unjust; but his hatred for triumphant wickedness, and his sympathy for the sufferings of hapless virtue, are beyond all question genuine. Let him not be quite forgotten, kindly son of an era which is at least outwardly purer, give him your tribute of applause in that far-off country whither he has gone. He was a brave true man, who loved justice and honesty, and who did his duty well. His message was fearlessly uttered to the men of his day; and until the social millennium has arrived, some at least of his strictures will apply with as much force to our times as they did to his. He spoke out without fear and favour, and it is only fitting that he should have his niche in the temple of the worthies who have fallen asleep.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE SMALLER GENTRY (1660-1800).

"THE old Hall is now converted into a farmhouse"—"The Grange has now been unoccupied for many years"—"In dry summers the foundations of the Manor-house can be clearly traced upon the turf"—"The estate in 1795 passed with other neighbouring properties into the hands of Alderman Indigo, the celebrated East India merchant"—"By a series of judicious purchases, his lordship has now become the owner of almost the whole parish." And so on, chapter after chapter, runs the guide-book. In themselves there is nothing very striking in such phrases. Yet we wonder how many who read them realise that in these commonplace lies the record of one of the most serious revolutions in English social history, of the silent destruction and disappearance from English society of a whole class, a class, moreover, which for at least two centuries had played no small part in the making of England.

At the close of the seventeenth century the "little squire" with his patrimony of two or three hundred a year was a familiar figure in English country life. Within a hundred years he was practically extinct, "a character now quite worn out and gone," says a writer in 1792. To-day, with the modern squire and his surroundings before one's eyes, the broad estates swollen with the wreckage of the agrarian revolution, the trim lawns and rebuilt country-seats and town-houses, it is difficult to recall even in outline the figure of one of the smaller gentry of the seventeenth century. He stood apart from the

yeoman in all the obstinate pride of the owner of a coat of arms, the representative of an honourable line, a member, albeit often a threadbare member, of the governing class. In social standing, in habits, in ideas, there was no barrier between him and his wealthier neighbours. He dined with them, rode to market with them, and cursed the Whigs with them on a footing of perfect equality. Poor as he might be, he was of gentle blood, and they could be no more. His house with its one keeping-room, and possibly a withdrawing-room for the womenfolk, its sleeping accommodation of the roughest, and the farm-midden hard upon the kitchen-door, was certainly no better than, often by no means so good as a second-rate modern farmhouse, and its comfort was infinitely less. His furniture and belongings,—the settle-forms and stools of his parlour, his chests and clothes-presses and his half-dozen chairs, the pewter flagons and dishes, and the row of old books, were such as a decent estate-bailiff of our own day might legitimately aspire to own. He himself was untravelled, ignorant, bigoted, coarse, with less knowledge of the world than the drover to whom he sold his bullocks, and no ideas of pleasure or recreation beyond a drinking-bout or a coursing-match. Yet such as he was, he filled an important place in rural society.

One does not, indeed, readily realise without figures the tremendous gaps which have been made in the ranks of the country gentry during the last two centuries by the disappearance of the small squires. Speaking roughly

(and all estimates upon the subject must necessarily be rough, owing to the absence of precise statistics), two hundred years ago there were at least four times as many gentry residing in the country as there are to-day. Allowing for the increase of population there ought to have been four times as many resident gentry to-day as there were two hundred years ago. Villages, which now have their one or two country-houses, could then count their dozen or score of "bonnet lairds." The very monuments of the village church, above all its registers, are eloquent witnesses to the extent of the disaster, for a disaster it assuredly is. "In the sixteenth century," writes Mr. Baring Gould, in his *OLD COUNTRY LIFE*, of the parish of Ugborough in South Devon, "we find in them [the parish registers] the names of the following families all of gentle blood, occupying good houses,—The Spealts, the Prideaux, the Stures, the Fowels, the Drakes, the Glass family, the Wolcombes, the Fountaynes, the Heles, the Crokers, the Percivals. In the seventeenth century occur the Edgcumbes, the Spoore, the Stures, the Glass family again, the Hillerdens, Crokers, Coolings, Heles, Collings, Kempthornes, the Fowells, Williams, Strodes, Fords, Prideaux, Stures, Furlongs, Reynolds, Hurrells, Fownes, Copplestones, and Saverys. In the eighteenth century there are only the Saverys and Prideaux; by the middle of the nineteenth these are gone. The grand old mansion of the Fowells, that passed to the Savery family, is in Chancery, deserted save by a caretaker, falling to ruins. What other mansions there were in the place are now farmhouses." At the present day indeed the vicar writes that there is not a single family of resident gentlefolk in the parish; and Ugborough is, in the opinion of Mr. Baring Gould, only an example, though

perhaps a striking example, of a universal change.

The records of the heralds' visitations, according to the same authority, tell the same tale. Of one hundred and twenty-four Devonshire families of gentle blood entered on the visitation of 1620, one hundred and thirteen are extinct in the male line; a few are represented through a daughter's descendants. One hundred and ninety-five families were entered in Ashmole's visitation of Berkshire in 1664; "but few survive," writes Mr. Cooper King, the latest historian of that county. Of the list of knights, gentlemen, and freeholders in the county of Chester drawn up in 1579, eight alone of the eighty-one from East Cheshire are still represented on their old estates.¹ In 1601 there were ninety gentlemen on the Commission of the Peace for Berkshire; by 1824 eighty-seven out of the ninety houses were extinct or had parted with their lands.² Of forty-three estates in the valley of the Ribble in Lancashire and Yorkshire, six and no more are still owned by the families who held them under Elizabeth. Fifty years ago, in his *RURAL RIDES*, Cobbett noted the same phenomena in southern England. On the road from Warminster to Devizes within a hundred years of the time he wrote there were twenty-two mansion-houses of sufficient note to be marked on the county map; in 1826 there were only seven. Upon his map of thirty miles of the valley of the Avon above Salisbury he marks the sites of fifty mansion-houses; forty-two of them were, when he wrote, mansion-houses no longer. A host of similar instances confront one in any county-history.

The evidence indeed is overwhelming, not only as to the strange way in which the number of the country

¹ Earwaker's *EAST CHESHIRE*, i. 17.

² Clarke's *HUNDRED OF WANTING*, p. 14.

gentry has crumbled and mouldered away, but that it was at the latter end of the seventeenth and during the eighteenth centuries that the change took place. The causes are no doubt complex. In part they were economical. The Civil War was responsible for much. Apart from its direct losses, the "slighted" houses, the destroyed woods, the bare farms, hundreds of squires had to face the fact, when the shouting was over for the return of his most Sacred Majesty, that their estates were saddled with legacies of the struggle in the shape of debts, the payment of which was hopeless, or which at best would cripple the family fortunes for a generation. What with the free gifts and loans to the King, and the exactions of the Parliament, many an honest gentleman, who had fought hard for the one and been correspondingly fined by the other, found himself in the position of Colonel Kirkby of Kirkby Ireleth, who "so encumbered his estate that neither he nor his descendants ever succeeded in clearing it of debt";¹ or like Sir John Danvers of Danby found himself forced to sell his estate to his own tenants. And it must be remembered that with a land-tax of four shillings in the pound on the gross value, and mortgage-interest at seven or eight per cent., he who went borrowing in Restoration days had a fair chance of fulfilling the old adage. Redress from the King was hopeless. The low prices of corn from 1666 to 1671 must have been the last straw to many an ancient house, already tottering on the verge of disaster. "They did talk much," noted Pepys on New Year's Day 166 $\frac{1}{2}$, "of the present cheapness of corn, even to a miracle; so as their farmers can pay no rent but do fling up their lands." Many estates went staggering on under the load of debt until the end of the

century. The list of Private Acts for the sale of lands,—one hundred and twenty-four in the thirty-one years of Charles the Second, two hundred and ten in the twelve years of William and Mary, two hundred and fifty-one in the short reign of Anne—is an instructive commentary. Well might Evelyn remark in 1795 that there were never "so many private bills passed for the sale of estates, showing the wonderful prodigality and decay of families."

There was always, too, before the eyes of the needy squire, who was naturally reluctant to part with his battered house and starved patrimony, the prospect, almost the certainty, that his family acres or their proceeds would yield him a far better return in trade than he could ever expect from farming. To trade indeed the smaller gentry had nothing of the modern aversion. The courtly mind of Chamberlayne was shocked to see "the sons of Baronets, Knights, and Gentlemen sitting in Shops and sometimes of Pedling Trades;"² no such scruples troubled the poorer squires. They married traders' daughters; it was nothing strange for their younger sons to become clothiers or merchants. Many a one, even of those who had no need to turn trader, was like Squire Blundell of Crosby not above "going £40" with his sister and cousin "in an adventure to the Barbadoes."³ And the profits were enormous. Squire Blundell in his adventure cleared a hundred per cent.; something better this than trying to find a purchaser for a granary of unsaleable wheat.

If the squire did desire to sell, there were a host of purchasers ready to hand. The same influences which induce men now to invest in broad acres the fortunes made in the City or

¹ ANNALS OF CARTMEL, p. 77.

² PRESENT STATE OF ENGLAND, 1695, p. 261.

³ A CAVALIER'S NOTEBOOK p. 248.

at the Bar were at work, but with tenfold force. The political value of land was far higher than it is to-day. To purchase land was not only to obtain a safe investment in days when trustees' stocks, Government securities, and railway debentures were still in the far future, nor only, thanks to Orlando Bridgman, the surest method of securing the stability of a family against the caprices of fortune or the wastefulness of one's descendants; it was the sole method by which in politics the weight of one's money could be felt. And as the eighteenth century wore on and the profits to be derived from the new agriculture became apparent, the habit of buying up the smaller estates became a settled policy. Wealthier squires who had saved money, noble houses that had repaired their fortunes by a "marriage into the City," East India nabobs, soldiers, chancellors, merchants, bankers, sinecurists, all were jostling each other in their anxiety to help the little squire out of his difficulties by taking over his acres. The Scotts, the Addingtons, the Finches, the Duncombes, the Clives, the Somers, the Pratts, the Yorkes, the Churchills, are a few and only a few of the great fortunes which during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were turned into land.

Social causes hastened the downfall. A drinking-bout was looked upon as the fitting close to a day's pleasure, and drunkenness as the most venal of peccadilloes. One of Mr. Spectator's correspondents in his 474th number found himself compelled to protest against the forced tipping at these gatherings. Nor was drinking the only form of extravagance. Sir Jeffrey Notch, the gentleman of an ancient family "that came to a great estate some years before he had discretion, and run it out in hounds, horses, and cockfighting," was not

without his imitators among the smaller squires. There had come over country life a new scale and a new extravagance, which was viewed with undisguised dislike by such old-fashioned cavaliers as Squire Blundell. The habit of visits to London or a watering-place grew rapidly in the closing years of the seventeenth century. By 1710 the London season and the town-house were an accomplished fact, and Hanover and Grosvenor Squares, New Bond Street, the upper part of Piccadilly, and a host of adjoining streets, had sprung into being within seventy years of the death of Charles the Second for the housing of the gentry during the season.

The earthen pot comes off worst in the race down stream. In the struggle for survival it was naturally the smaller squires who went to the wall. Their position tended to grow more and more untenable. With the greater gentry who could afford a town-house, who were versed in the affairs of the day, wore the latest fashion in perruques, and could quote the new plays, the smaller squires must have fallen further and further out of touch; the pressure to sell must have proved stronger and stronger. Once the ranks were broken the process of destruction went on with increased and increasing speed, for the survivors found themselves more and more isolated.¹ Some of them, we know, by judicious marriages, or by thrift and consequent purchasing out their neighbours, rose into the higher ranks of the squirearchy. Many without doubt simply dropped back into the yeomanry, and shared in the yeomanry's destruction. The great bulk were bought out; and upon the ruins of their order grew up the modern squire, with ten times their acreage and twenty times their rental.

¹ See on the whole subject Toynbee's *LECTURES ON THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND*.

It may be doubted whether any of the great agrarian changes of the eighteenth century was a more serious disaster to rural society. No doubt the "bonnet laird" in his habits and ideas resembled, as Macaulay puts it, the village miller or ale-house keeper of our own day. Probably, as Cobbett says, he was a bigoted Tory, an obstinate opponent of all improvement, and a hard master. But his function in rural society was not a trivial one. He was a link, and a link the need of which we are sorely feeling to-day, between the great proprietor and his tenants, attached to the one by the ties of tradition and status, to the other by community of interest. Un-

courtly, rough, almost brutal as he was, his influence was a factor to be considered, and must have made the rule of one man impossible in rural society. He made for rural independence, even if that independence were only of a stolid and limited character. With all his faults and shortcomings, his destruction blotted an important feature out of country life. And occurring, as it did, as part and parcel, with the destruction of the yeoman and the peasant-farmer, of the agrarian revolution of the eighteenth century, it was the leading incident in a process which drained the rural districts of the very elements of rural life.

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS.

THE two wide glass doors that form the end of the little dining-room are thrown open, and the breakfast-table is set in the midst of the inrushing sunshine. Outside, beyond the steep edge of the descending garden, there is a luminous width of air and dimpled water, freckled with sunshine and with a multitude of boats, and streaked by the busy paddles of frequent ferry-steamers. The further shore recedes into an azure shadow, and the islands float uncertainly amid the shining stretches of water; the world for the nonce is ceiled and floored with a changing radiance of amethyst and silver, and there is no beauty of material things that can measure itself to-day against the large splendour of sunlight.

Below, at the foot of the cliff, one can hear the plash of water tumbling upon the rocks, and lapping against the edge of the steps that run steeply down from the garden to the beach, starting at the top between a clump of aloes and a scarlet trail of Virginia creeper, and fragrant on its way with overhanging heliotrope; the sound of plashing water, cool and softly restless, lapping the stone stair with an infinity of little noises and the deeper overtone of the incoming tide. But that is only one note of the chord that makes the music of the silence.

It is ten o'clock in the morning, and it is *Toussaint*; all the bells across the bay and behind us are ringing, and their voices fill the air with the crossing of many songs. There is one that is deep and sonorous that sings to us from over the water; and another, more ancient, that chimes

in with the broken voice of age; it is tremulous, one thinks, with the weight of many memories and the long vision of tears. Yet to-day it rings out with the rest of its neighbours, and it is only in a plaintive querulous undertone that one may hear sometimes the bitterness of its age, the touch of the forgotten, yet unforgettably past. "*Combien je regrette . . . le temps perdu—*"

For all the world is *en fête* to-day, and hungry moreover, for yesterday was *maigre*. There is not a cloud in the sky, nor a shadow across the golden sun; and though it is barely ten o'clock in the morning, and the 1st of November, it is as radiantly hot and serene as a July day at home should be. Yet we are not on the Riviera,—not at all, only in a French village on the gray Breton coast, that wakes up into a short mad jollity in summer, and dozes peacefully through the rest of the uneventful year; and we shall have cold days yet, I doubt not, though it is a sheltered and a sunny corner, and keeps winter well at bay. But it is something to sit in the sunshine this November day, drowsily watching the boats on the bay below, and listening to the clash of bells pealing across the water; something to be pleasantly aware of the merry chatter in the street, and the pattering *sabots* of the happy children free from school; something to be lazily warm and sunlapped, while yonder, at home, it is winter already and cold even beside the fire.

It is a day for idle thought and idle speech, when one's fancy strays in the wake of every sunbeam, or is

caught by a dancing mote in the enveloping glory of sky and sun and sea. Across the bay there is a wooded cliff, and the flight of birds above it draws one's eyes thither for a moment. It is good to be there on such a day as this; when its shady walks are walled with amber foliage, and the small herbs of the banks are illumined in russet and crimson; it is good, too, to be there in spring, when the young buds are variously purple, or green, or silver, and the yellow daffodils nod above a brown carpet of rustling leaves, or amid a tangle of fresh grass. But to get there, one has to pass through the sleepy town behind us, built on the narrow point between the sheltered bay and the purple island-dotted sea, where half the shops are closed and the rest have relapsed contentedly into a cheerful idleness. There is a swarm of empty villas, white and red and fancifully bedecked with tiles, looking out blankly seaward with shuttered windows, beside the deserted casino and the solitary *plage*, where only the surf beats loudly on the yellow sand and flings itself in leaping foam upon the rocks. Yes, it sounds melancholy; and in truth, for those who need a small incessant torment of frivolity, one cannot call it gay. But for those who only love a crowd when they can be solitary in it; as in a great city, where, if one so choose, one may live the lonelier for being in the midst of a swarming life; for such a one, it is pleasant beyond comparison in the long autumn sunshine which dapples the world with gold and pearl, and flickers merrily between the poplars on the wide white roads; one has space and the leisure to be alone with one's self, and to find one's self infinite good company.

There are, moreover, the people of the place, who now have time to

amuse themselves, and the where-withal, it is to be supposed, having taken in the stranger and entertained him, for a consideration; there are even a few English, who look at one suspiciously, as they pass by, with the flicker of a critical smile. And for distractions, if one have the mind thereto, they are not lacking; but they are such as need a humble spirit and a discerning eye. There is, for instance, always the church, where one may betake one's self, and find reflected one's every mood even to the unvirtuous. There is a particular *curé*, who has stepped down to us from the happy days when Gargantua was king and Rabelais his chronicler; for though he may be actually, as I must not doubt, a very saintly person, he has a moist eye and a personal contour that seem to clash with a proper asceticism. So one casts him mentally as the jovial monk, in one's peripatetic romances wherein he must dance to all manner of tunes; though it is a grievous liberty to take with a worthy dignity of the Church, who, moreover, wears ermine and lace, and who doubtless cannot help his comfortable figure.

The church, one finds, is here a very live thing in the midst of the life about it. It is never empty; it is full of the faint smell of incense, and the pungency of continual occupation; *sabots* clatter in and out, children come and go with sudden, hasty genuflections; old women sit in the corners, or tell their beads before the altars; the lights flicker and the tall plaster figures look down graciously smiling, or gaze upward in a rapturous adoration. They are conventionally young, and round-fleshed, and radiant in their tenderly coloured robes, and quaint contrasting gauds of crown and necklet and pendent votive hearts; conventional symbols of conventions, and stiffly beautiful with a

beauty that is itself a tradition, a beauty that is a rubric and an article of the Faith, and a lingering small acceptance from the far days of a facile content in things religious.

Then the church fills with a swarm of white caps which lift themselves strangely into snowy wings and crests, so that one may pick out the women of the different *pays*; and men's voices chant sonorously, and the full-rigged model ships, hanging in the chancel and before the Mary-altar, vibrate and swing softly to and fro at the opening and shutting of doors. Those who have hung them there have long been dead; but there are faces in the crowd beneath that are raised towards them, and eyes that grow dim,—too dim to see the dust of years that blackens the rigging, too dim to see anything but that more distant ship that is away at the Banks or at Iceland, in the fear of storms and the strange confusion of the fogs, and that will surely come back, unless—“*Étoile de la Mer*, send us our men home from the sea!”

And in the lady-chapel, amid the rosaries and the trinkets and the gilded hearts, are hung a string of tiny boats, roughly carved from common wood and shaped by rude fingers; but the prayer and the thanksgiving are as strong about them as about the stately ships hanging high overhead. One looks at them and remembers the greed of the engulfing waters; the gray enveloping bewilderment of the mists; the fathers and husbands and sons who are amid them; the long summers when there is no word of the absent, and the autumn, when the women wait day by day for the first dim sight of the homecoming boat. And there are those who must wait, and wait, for the boat that never comes back—“*Étoile de la Mer*, send us our men home from the sea!”

And now there is a movement in the church, and as if a wind swept in

from the west the white caps sway before it, and the quaint white heads stoop and bow to the ground, with a quick rustle and an after silence—

But it is hot to-day, too hot to make one of the crowd; it is incomparably better in the full breadth of the sunshine, where the gold and blue of the sky stretches to its large horizons; where one can fancy for a moment that this is verily the South, and a land where winter may not come. And yet one has only to walk along the white road yonder, towards that young grove of palms (as at least one imagines them to be) from here, with the children running beneath and the bright sea glittering between the tapering stems; a little closer, and one will see that they are not palms, any more than that is the iridescent water of the Mediterranean. They are but cabbages, and we are still in Brittany.

In this country, cabbages certainly play a great part in the landscape, and not a wholly unpicturesque one, either; with their loose gray-green leaves springing in tufts atop of five-foot stalks, and the sun dancing in checkers along the alleys between them, where the children come and go. But indeed this is the paradise of vegetables; one lingers in the market and before the shops, marvelling at the clean perfection of the things and the excellence of them in form and colour. What beauty is there of blossom that is not modestly shared by these cauliflowers, creamy and globular in their encircling fringe of tender green, the smooth golden rind and warmer flesh of the pumpkins, the scarlet carrots, and the angry crimson of the aubergines? But the cabbages are not to be seen as they should be, either in market or shop; but in groves on the hillsides, with the sun full on their loose frilled leaves, and the sea glittering

between and beyond their long pale stems. One no longer wonders that a thing so stately in its homeliness should have lent itself to coaxing and cajoling lips; as when Mathurine, the pretty bold-eyed shrimp-seller, would have one buy the leaping transparent brown things in her basket at an unheard-of price: "But then, *mon petit chou*," she laughs, "it is Mathurine who must live!"

Last night, no longer, it sounded in one's ears with an odd tenderness, that foolish little word; it was only a child that said it, a thin wan woman-child in a tattered gown and *sabots* on her bare feet, leading a ragged boy bigger than herself by a motherly hand. I do not know whence they came, but they had ravenous eyes and pinched blue lips, and they looked about them strangely; till presently the girl caught sight of a scrap of sweet cake that had fallen amid the rubbish in the gutter, dropped in passing, perhaps, or indifferently thrown away. She seized it eagerly and wiped it on her gown; for one instant her hand hesitated and her eyes glittered uncertainly; then, with a quick movement, she held it to the boy's mouth and smiled superior. "But no," she said, as he offered reluctantly to share it; "keep it, *mon chou*! I am too old, you know, for sweet things." But she was old enough, poor little soul, to be hungry; and old enough, too, to lie with a wonderfully saving grace, in spite of the longing in her eyes.

And *à propos* of cabbages, one has an intimate acquaintance with many, of the human sort; the men and women that are born and live and die in an apathy miscalled life, and who transmute the tragedy of existence into a sort of brassicaceous melodrama. There is a small town in the north of England, sinking nowadays fast into a village,—one of

many similar, no better and no worse, it is to be supposed—where one may pass from house to house, and find a history in each; where one may ring the changes on every combination of possession and desire; and where the sordid commonplaces of death are as little dignified as the daily needs of living.

But among these people every passion and emotion is worn with an unreserve which is never enthusiastic; they are born cynical and unresponsive, and, unbelieving, are indifferent in their unbelief. "No, I don't think much on church," said a little servant-girl of fourteen; "I don't set no store by it. But there is the choir teas an' things—an' the priest he come a botherin'—". So she had been confirmed, indifferently as she did everything else; and chuckled a little over the foolishness of it. And amid the tragedies which are not tragic, and the sorrows which stop short of tears, they live through life indifferently; they "set no store by it"; but they take it as it is, and amuse themselves as they can, with or without benefit of clergy. One may pick up the plots of a dozen dramas; till presently one finds that the dramatic element has been left out, and there is only a futile episode or two which lead inconsequently to nothing.

There was a love-affair, for instance; a youth, the son of a respectable man in the village, who fell in love with one of the girls of the place, deeply in love, one supposes, as these things go, to judge from the continuation. They were seventeen or thereabouts. He was "not over clever," as they said there, short, and broad-shouldered and silent; she was a white-faced long-limbed slip of a girl, with a swinging walk and a pair of roving black eyes; she had gipsy blood in her, and carried its mark in her shapely hands

and upheld head. Not a likely pair to take to each other, one would think; but after "sweethearting" during a few summer weeks, they electrified the village by going off together to Newcastle, leaving word behind that they meant to be married. This was all wrong; they might have stayed at home and amused themselves, as others did; that was the ordinary behaviour of young men and women, and no one would have questioned it. But to run off together, when there was no need, and to get married before there was any necessity, a thing no one ever thought of thereabouts; this was strictly unnatural and improper; the culprits must be followed, and the thing prevented.

So some of his brothers went off after him and brought him back; he was not at all put about, and took the matter calmly, as he had taken the elopement, as an incident of but small importance; and the girl came back too, while there was another incident a few months after, that was accepted in the same matter-of-course way. The years went on, without very much change of any kind. Ben was a little older and more bearded, as silent as ever and not much wiser; he spoke to the girl sometimes at the street-corners, and never seemed aware of the small object in knickerbockers that was already old enough to go to school. It was eight years after the elopement, and when the object above mentioned was fully seven years old, that Ben slouched one evening into the room where the girl lived with her people. I do not know how he found words enough in which to explain himself, but he made them understand that the banns were out, and that he meant to marry her in three weeks. "I couldn't do't afore," he added, "but they've give me a rise at last." All the eight years

he had been waiting for this; and Janey persuaded herself that she had been as faithful, and did her best, one supposes, to revive a dutiful affection, with an astonished delight that marriage should have come her way.

Well; it was soon over. The preparations, and the service, and the pride of being well-dressed, and in the vestry, the vicar's hesitating congratulations. He said, with a glance at them both, that he hoped they had not taken this step without thinking it over carefully; and Ben replied, with the air of saying a neat thing, that he had been thinking of it for eight years. Then the return home, to Janey's home, where there was little space, scant furniture, and less of privacy or ventilation; but there was food in plenty and rather more than enough to drink; so that presently, the neighbours first protesting and then ejecting, Ben was picked up by the police upon the sidewalk, where he had fallen down the stairs, and finished his long courtship by a night (his marriage-night) in the cells.

I wish I could carry the idyll a little further, but the romance, such as it was, soon dropped out of it; for some weeks later, when they took a little outing to Newcastle, Ben came back alone and seemed to have no answer ready for intrusive questioners. He looked like a dog that had been beaten; but he had neither then, nor since, anything to tell; only he lives alone in his one-room cottage and works for Janey's boy, to whom he has attached himself limpet-like and wordlessly, as he did to his mother, and with small chance of better result. I saw them lately, the boy an idle rascal with a vicious brow and sullen furtive eyes, loafing about the streets and spending the pence that he steals from his father,

or from any one else when occasion offers; while Ben looks at him with the same obstinate fidelity which he gave to Janey. There should be a tragedy somewhere here, but there is nothing so convincing; only a small incessant wretchedness, the sight of which tastes bitter in the mouth and salt as tears; a wretchedness which, with love and life, and death, is but an episode of an incidental existence.

Yet this dulness of emotion is not at all confined to that district, or to that class; there are many of us, that are by choice, or by inheritance, cabbages. It was but the other day that a marriage at the last moment was broken off because the man, on thinking it over, could not face the change, the unsettling of all the habits which he had built up about himself. This he told her, not softening the thing, being well convinced of its reasonableness, and having his eyes turned in upon himself; and then he retired happily to his daily routine and the encroaching rigours of the small things he made into his masters. They said she was foolish enough to be unhappy over it; but it is to be inferred that she had no consoling habitudes to absorb her thoughts. At least he was honest, he went to her with the truth in his mouth; only honesty is so terribly naked by contrast with this world of under-clothing, that one wonders if he had not better have lied; unless the cabbage would verily not have withstood the uprooting.

It is fortunate that we have, most of us, the power of living through things; for if we were all to die when we are broken-hearted, we should too often be despatched into another world in an early state of unfitness. But the night passes and the blackness of it, and the morning is fair; it is good to be alive and a cabbage and

wholesomely indifferent to the big passions that torture men.

We all, I suppose, have some sort of a private and particular "lake and a fairy boat" in which we may sail upon a magic sea, and dream dreams; or we watch for its coming, laden with fortune, fame, or love; or it will spread, at our will, its silver wings and carry us to the strange bright lands that sit beside the further seas. There is little doubt that one paints Bangkok, or Mandalay, or Soûl in a beauty that is not theirs, when one dreams of walking in their streets and living in the midst of their life; but there are some of us, cabbages though we be, that yet are born with the wander-need within us; the roads that our feet have not trodden call to us, and sooner or later, we come. Some day, I, too, shall go to Siam. And when that day arrives, I do not hope that electricity will project us to our destinations, or even that that ancient delight, the flying-carpet, will be trained to daily use; I do not ask for anything better than the promiscuousness of a railway-carriage, the bustle of coming and going at the stations, the crossing, changing, jostling, hurrying life that flashes past, the faces that look in upon us, the words we recall afterwards, the infinitely small things of which memory is made. Only the other day,—it was in France—we travelled eight in a compartment, not to speak of bags and bundles; the racks above us were laden, and we sat in stiff-necked expectancy, in the shadow of impending catastrophes. We were eight: three young and small soldiers, an English couple, two women, and myself; moreover, one of the women was large and unsleender, overlapping her neighbours and incommoding the soldier sitting opposite to her, who was sleepy, and slipped presently into a comfortable sprawl. "But, *Monsieur le Militaire*,"

she broke out at last, startling us all into wakefulness, "assuredly you have the legs of a giraffe, you! Observe only that I am *entouré de soldats*, and retire yourself then, that I may expand!" And she did so, apparently; but I don't quite know what became of the rest of us.

And I recall another travelling companion, an English soldier, a sergeant, who wore the colours of the Queen with a smartness that became them. He had been all through the Egyptian and the Soudanese wars, and told much of what he had seen, telling it well. We were in the night-express; the others in the carriage slept, in various stages of *déshabillé* and discomfort; the rain beat on the windows and the train roared and rocked and jangled as it rushed southwards. But I only heard the strong voice of my neighbour, as he poured out story after story of the two campaigns; and now we laughed, and now we fell to silence for a space, as he turned from the wild jollity of a camp to its queer sudden pathos, and spoke of the bravery that went unrewarded and the great deeds that could never be recompensed. "For it ain't the best of us that's decorated," he said; "and, after all, if a fellow drops behind in a rush, and has all his wounds in front, what better medal could he have than that?" But I glanced at his breast, and, smiling, shook my head: he was willing to tell story after story of what his chums had done, and what he had heard of others; but he did not say how he had gained that plain little cross, and he only reddened and grew taciturn when I asked about it. "'Twas nothing," he said awkwardly, and there was no further word of it to be got from him; "'twas of no consequence. Now, if they had given it to—" and he plunged into another story which ended in such a manner that we

had both to stare hard out of window.

Not long after that I was travelling in France, hurrying southward, too, but at a very different rate of speed, and with the hot southern sun beating implacably upon us, and filling the train with a stifling heat and dust, instead of dashing through rain and storm and the night. In the opposite corner was an apple-cheeked old woman, in a wonderful cap, with a bundle on her knee, and a trickle of tears lying in the wrinkles that seamed her face. "I go," she explained to us at intervals, "to meet my boy; he is a soldier, you understand; and he is coming home from overseas—oh! he has been incredibly far away. And he is ill—very ill; it is those terrible hot countries. He wanted so much to be a soldier, my André; he said he would come back to me in a beautiful uniform and with a medal on his breast; but now he is ill—very ill." And after a little silence, she added, "But perhaps the good air of France—" We drew near to Marseilles, and she looked round at us anxiously, with an open need of reassurance. "*Voyons!* I do not care about the medal; but he is ill, very ill, and he has been so far away—" Then she went off to meet her André, who had no wounds to wear in front, and who, perhaps, would not even be there to meet her.

Somebody once, I think, spoke of mankind as "Kings of opportunity"; and indeed it would be a very admirable thing even but once to command fate. But we have lost the trick and the mantle of conscious royalty; we wear the Emperor of China's invisible robe, and there is always some one ready to perceive our nakedness. It is all very well to order the tide to stand still, but it has a grievous manner of disobedience; and truly, when one comes to think of

it, it is not so much that royalty is lessened as that we think less fit to obey it. It was worth while being royal when power was a tangible thing and a crown lay actually upon one's temples. One can envy that princess who graved in stone her royal, "Grumble who will, thus shall it be, for it is my good pleasure"; one would even like to say as much one's self, but for a lurking conviction that no one would pay any particular attention to it. No; we have lost the habit of obedience, except perhaps to an oriental potentate in jewelled robes, or a barbaric autocrat in none,—when it must be difficult to look royal, one thinks, though there are those that succeed.

There is a monarch of my acquaintance who is amiable in his manners and a fatherly despot in his government; his lately-learned civilisation still sits strangely on him, and he doffs it sometimes, to take a luxurious plunge-bath into his former barbarism, though solely, as he assures his conscience and the nearest missionary, out of necessity. He was discovered recently superintending the happy despatch, by several refined modes of torture, of a considerable number of persons connected with his court, and was remonstrated with accordingly. "But consider," he returned, with conviction, "if I do not kill my people sometimes, how will they know that I am the King?" And there was really a great deal to be said for it from his point of view. For he was a shrewd as well as an enlightened person, in spite of an immense desire to be a white man and a brother; and when he was told that he should not cut off the ears and noses of his wives when they plagued him, he said that civilisation gave him a stomach-ache.

But it is a mere necessity nowadays to be either oriental or barbaric, if one would know what a fine manner

of thing it is to be set up over other men; unless, indeed, sleeping, one could dream oneself into an old-time tale, when constitutions were not and princes were a law unto themselves; when the king's daughter was all beautiful within, and his sons declared their birthright in purple and fine linen; when the king's face gave grace indeed, and he was free to pardon as to punish; when the king's sword was unconquerable as the king's word was unbroken. In those far days, if you were born to the burden of it, it was worth while to be royal and something other than the rest of men, though it must sometimes have been hard to live up to it even in the world of old romance.

I seem to have read a story once in some old book, a foolish fantastic thing which yet lingers oddly in my mind, of a King and his judgment. For he had a wife that was beautiful and frail; and after a long drama of temptation and sin and shame, learning her secret he went to her, and showed her what was in his mind. And she, appalled at his pitifulness, yearned for punishment and thereby expiation; and fetching her child, laid it before him with tears. "Lord, I am not worthy," she sobbed. "It is but right you should take it from me." But the King looked down upon her and upon the child, and mused awhile in silence, and then returned it to her arms. "Keep it," he said; "it will comfort you for the burden of a crown." And, the chronicler adds, the Queen wept, and sinned no more. Yet she would, perhaps, have better understood the bearing of a penance and the absolution thereby gained.

But that was in the foolish old times, and all the world is wiser now, and cultivates its little sins kindly: it is even the fashion to seem worse than we really are and to look on

virtue as plebeian and underbred ; and we prefer to play the king of operetta, rather than to strut the tragic scene and round our mouths to great emotions. So we yawn over the passions of Phèdre (some of us), and crowd to watch the evident feet of Nini Patte en l'Air.

There was lately a foreign prince in Paris, travelling for his education ; he was simple in his tastes and of a discerning intelligence, and they took him to see a great tragedian play her greatest rôle of sin and suffering. The next night he went to the Folies-Bergères. "Now this," he said, "is reasonable ; this is serious. The other was *pour rire* ; people do not speak like that at all, and if they did such things, they would be put in prison. So I have been taught, and that it is wrong to do things for which you will be put in prison. But this—is reasonable. *J'aime à voir des femmes, et même d'en voir beaucoup.*" And we are all reasonable nowadays, even those of us who are kings.

But, nevertheless, I think we have the best of it, we happy folk who are not born in the trammels of the purple, and who can drowse or drudge through life as we please, without convulsing a nation by our small caprices ; who can wear old clothes and enjoy the comfort of our loose and easy-fitting peccadilloes ;

who can sit down hungry to meat and rise up satisfied ; and who can feel as intimate a satisfaction in the beauty of sky and sea, of the many-coloured hills, and the admirable sunshine. It is a sufficing thing for one of a humble spirit to be warm and indolent and full of wandering fancies ; to be soothed and tickled by the sound of lapping waters and the various pealing of bells ; to hear the high voices of women and the laughter of children, and to catch the holiday note in the clatter of the hurrying feet. And, like the deeper undertone that creeps into the plashing waters of the bay from the deep seas outside, one remembers, now and then, that if to-day is All Saints, to-morrow is All Souls, and the priest will go down to the shore and pray for all those that sleep in all the waters of the world, at the Banks and at the Iceland fishings ; and there will be some around him who listen and remember, and some who listen and fear. There will be eyes dim with the long habit of tears, and others weary with watching for the boats that have not yet returned ; not yet, and it is November. There will be singing and chanting, and the incense will mingle with the salt smell of the seaweed ; but the deepest and the longest prayer will be an unspoken one—"Étoile de la Mer, send us our men home from the sea !"

THE HERONS.¹

CHAPTER XXI.

WHEN Cosmo answered Edmund's passionate farewell by blank, irresponsible silence he had no intention of being cruel, no wish to steel his heart against his brother. His heart had been long since involuntarily steeled; and across a great gulf he seemed dimly to hear Edmund protest and plead, "like a tale of little meaning, though the words were strong." But all the while he was pleading with himself on Edmund's behalf, and his own words too seemed meaningless. "After all, he is my brother, and I loved him once. Ought I to pity him and stand by him still? What did I ever do for him at best? And what can any man do for him now?"

The look of Edmund's face, the sound of his voice, had brought back for a moment the feelings of their last meeting, the doubt and confusion and horror, the irrepressible shrinking, the agonising struggle between outraged love and just contempt. If Cosmo seemed stony and impassive, it was because he was torn with conflicting emotions, some harsh, some tender, but all seeming to him equally useless and equally painful. And then he raised his head and saw Edmund's look of farewell, and his gesture,—as of one who carries something secret in his breast, just touching it to assure himself that it is there. Then the window opened and closed behind him, and he was gone; while his face was still printed upon Cosmo's eyes and his words yet lingered in the air.

Half mechanically Cosmo rose and went to the window to look after his brother, but the angle of the house hid him instantly from view. He must see which way Edmund went. There was an upper window from which one could see all the winding ways that converged at Pennithorne,—the road to the town, and the turning towards Herne's Edge, and two or three byways beside. Without asking himself what he meant, he ran up stairs and flung the window open, leaning out into the raw misty air and scanning the wide snowy landscape, where the dark hedgerows just indicated the innumerable little fields and the long lanes winding between them. There was the road to the town, bare as far as eye could trace it, with the snow beaten down and sullied by cart-wheels and horses' feet. There was the narrower, less trodden way that led up into the hills, and so to Herne's Edge; and—yes! there was a dark figure moving along it, far off already, but not too far to be recognised. Branching out of the lane, just before it turned a shoulder of the hill and disappeared from view, was the rough cart-track that between two dry stone walls led up and out on to the moor. As the watcher looked, with eyes sharpened by a nameless fear, that figure reached it, opened the gate and passed up between the walls, seeming at that distance to move slowly over the snow, but growing dimmer every moment through the gathering dimness of the winter afternoon.

Cosmo drew back and shut the window. For a moment he stood still,

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his breath coming quick, his heart throbbing fast. That glimpse of the world outside, that breath of keen air from off the snowy moorland, seemed to have blown away the clouds that hung over him, to have left him free to see things as they were, to understand, and to remember. His brother's words came back to him, and the look and tone that went with them. He began to realise what he had done; that he had sent a desperate man out alone into that awful solitude, to meet whatever the suggestion of his own despair or the instigation of the devil might bring to face him there.

The next moment Cosmo was down stairs, searching almost instinctively for his hat and overcoat, and a stout stick that stood in a corner he knew of. As he opened the door and stepped out into the snow it did occur to him that he was not very fit for such a task as lay before him; but in the same instant he said to himself that it could not be helped. No one but himself must follow Edmund now; to no living creature could he breathe the fear that he would not name even to his own soul. Far or near, he must follow Edmund alone, and find him, if God had mercy on them both, before the darkness fell; and then let the moment's need teach him what to say. He dreaded lest a meeting with his mother or any of her people should entail remonstrances, questions, explanations, and delay though it could not stop him. As he left the house he ran almost into the arms of the butler, who looked at him as if half believing him to have taken leave of his senses. Cosmo paused an instant. "Tell my mother that my brother has been here, and that I have gone with him to Herne's Edge. I may not be able to get back to-night, but I will explain everything to-morrow."

The man looked at him in dubious

silence, but before he could frame his lips to a remonstrance Cosmo was gone, across the untrodden snow of the garden and out by the door in the wall, where he had taken Evelyn Armitage and where Moloch had waited for him on that summer morning, so long ago it seemed. He thought of Moloch now and wished for him; but that good dog was safely chained up at the Edge, because at Pennithorne he was not a welcome guest.

He had often trodden those lanes when they were wrapped in the great winding-sheet that covered all the country side. It was some time since the snow had fallen, and it lay now in a solid mass rather than in white powdery flakes; even in the lonely lane the middle of the path was somewhat beaten, though still it was what the country folks would have called heavy weary travelling. He did not think, he hardly felt, what kind of travelling it was, but pressed on, looking neither to right nor left, till the short cut to the Lechfield was reached. As he expected, only one pair of footprints turned that way. Edmund had left the gate ajar, and Cosmo leaned upon it a minute, drawing two or three deep breaths, then quickened his pace and went on and up between the low broken walls, following those footprints.

Dark gray sky over white world,—little tracks of beast and bird beside the road,—curling drifts like sculptured marble where the wind had caught the whirling flakes and swept them off the upland to fall in the shelter of the wall,—all these he saw and saw not. Two things alone he saw and perceived: with his outward eyes, those solitary footprints, leading on and on into the trackless waste, footprints of a desolate man going out alone into "a land forgotten of God"; and with the eyes of his soul a little room in a little house in Canonbury,

and Margaret with her children about her knee. As he struggled on, and those pictures came and went before his eyes, it seemed to Cosmo that if he was too late it would be easier to die there with Edmund than to face the innocent, pleading eyes of that little group in Canonbury.

But he walked down his excitement as he began to grow weary, and then he began to think ; to ask himself how it was that he could not say, when his brother pleaded for them, the words that now he would give all he was worth for the chance of saying.

He looked back over all that he could remember of Edmund, from his earliest childish recollection of the elder brother who was always kind, and always in disgrace with the parents who were so good to the younger. For the first time he saw the other as he was, not as a banished prince who could do no wrong, or as a hardened shameless deceiver, but as a loving, faulty, erring man, born with some defect of nature, some fault of blood, from whence drawn Cosmo could guess, but blushed to say even to himself. How far he was to blame, how far he might have fought against his doom and overcome it, whether he might have had more help from a father to whom his sin was less evidently loathsome—who could say ? At any rate, his sin had cost him dear enough, and the price was not all paid yet.

For his own part Cosmo felt that he could more easily have excused Edmund for committing any or all of the sins that had ever stained the annals of the Herons since that far-off day when they first emerged from obscurity ; and now for the first time that struck him as manifestly unjust. Who were they, after all, that they should pick and choose in the Decalogue, and

If, in one fatal respect, Edmund had not been born a Heron, but had followed some one else who must not be named or blamed,—was that not his misfortune, though what had come of it might be his fault ?

Since Edmund's confession it had seemed folly to yield to any gentler thoughts of him. The knowledge of his falseness had poisoned the memory of his caressing manner, his ready gratitude for any small service, his frank dependence on his brother's love ; all those graces of daily life that it had seemed as if only a true heart could have taught him. The memory of these things had been torture to Cosmo ; it was torture still, but in a different way. He knew now that Edmund's love had been real, if the only real thing about him ; he knew it by that instinct by which the heart recognises and computes the value of what is offered to it alone. And Love has a royal right to her own welcome, though she come as a beggar in vile company, hand in hand with Falsehood and Shame.

Those gray leaden clouds had not stooped so near the ground for nothing. It was beginning to snow ; half a dozen flakes fell softly through the still air, and then a pause, and then the air was suddenly thick with them on every side. No matter ! It would be long before they could blot out those footprints, deeply cut into the frozen surface of last week's snow ; and so long as those went on what did anything matter, but to follow them ?

The Lechfield stretched round him now on every side wide and level. When Cosmo last saw it, it had been white with cotton-grass, save for innumerable black pools fringed with various plants ; now it was all white for the pools were frozen, and the snow was a more complete winding-sheet for

Compound for sins they are inclined to
By damning those they have no mind to ?

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the dead city than "the Canna's hoary beard." The black pools were there still though, and some of them were deep, and the ice on them was not so thick but that a man might have broken it with a stone. But the footprints went on, and Cosmo, drawing a long breath that sounded like relief, went on following them.

He had begun to realise that it was better not to think; that there were certain possibilities he dare not face; that even to blame himself now was waste of energy when he was like to need all that he had. To overtake Edmund before it was too late, that was the one supremely practical consideration. It would not do to ask himself what might happen, —what might already have happened, —if he had delayed too long. It would not do even to let his fancy play tricks; to see in the curling drifts the outlines of a figure that the snow had covered; to picture a white face upturned to the gray sky, and despairing eyes taking their last farewell of a world that seemed already dead. Such thoughts only made his heart beat too fast, and took the strength of which he had none to spare.

Thank God! those footprints still went on, and the falling snow had not blotted them out yet. They went on now over the long roll of the moor to the west of the Lechfield, and Cosmo quickened his pace so far as the heavy walking would permit, forgetting his weariness, or rather never having remembered or felt it. But now the snow seemed to cling round his feet and hinder them; and how endless seemed the long slow ascent whose summit was always just ten yards before him, against the low slate-coloured sky! It was like a vivid dream of terror and strain, of hopeless, useless effort; but in a dream when the tension becomes too great the dreamer escapes, and here no waking was possible till the end was

reached. He could not even say "God help me!" though his whole soul was one voiceless, wordless agony of supplication that he might not be too late.

It was reached at last, the brow of the weary, interminable hill. There the footprints strayed off to the left, and following them with his eyes Cosmo could see, far down the slope, a dark something,—the figure of a man sitting on a low wind-swept shelf of rock, his elbows on his knees and his head resting on his joined hands.

For a moment Cosmo's heart stood still; then he turned to the rough descent, thick with heather and cumbered with great stones. The deep snow muffled his steps, and he had drawn quite near before Edmund lifted his head. One startled, sullen look the elder brother gave, like that of a trapped wild thing whose cunning has failed it; and then he dropped back to his former attitude. Cosmo came nearer, and touched him on the shoulder, but he hardly moved.

"Well?" at last he said reluctantly. "Why did you follow me here? What do you want?"

"I want first what you have in your breast-pocket. And I must have it, Edmund!"

Edmund looked up as if surprised; his hand went to his bosom, but paused there; then he turned his head away, and looked out over the waste as if resolved neither to hear nor to answer.

"Edmund," said Cosmo again. "Did I ever ask you for anything before? You have spoken sometimes as though you owed me something, but whether or no I must have this. Give it me, if ever you cared for me."

The stronger will, at a white heat of resolve, must needs carry the day. Edmund's hand, as if in spite of himself, went again to his breast, and

drew from the pocket a tiny bottle stoppered and tied down. The instant it appeared Cosmo wrested it unceremoniously from his fingers, flung it on the ground and smashed it with his heel, treading it into the snow.

"That is childish," said Edmund sulkily, after a moment. "If I want to do that sort of thing no one can prevent my accomplishing it, in one way if not in another. And if, as seems likely enough, I have neither pluck nor resolve to carry out such an idea, what good has that done?"

"Enough for the present moment, at all events. And now I want you to come with me."

"I am not coming. When I said good-bye to you down yonder I did not wish, any more than intend, ever to see you or to cross your path again."

"I am beginning at the wrong end after all," said Cosmo with abrupt simplicity. "What I have to do here is to ask you to forgive me."

"For what?"

"For having forgotten that we are brothers, and that there is a tie between us that nothing can break; for having seemed to constitute myself your judge."

"There is some disproportion between our offences against each other; but I forgive you, exactly as you forgive me. That is to say, I wish you no harm, and I would rather never see your face again."

"You are unjust to me, Edmund, and I suppose I have no right to be surprised at it. But I wish you would look me in the face now. I have a great deal more to say to you than I can easily manage unless you will be generous and meet me half-way."

No one had ever seen Edmund sullen before; but there must have been some latent sullenness in his nature, for he did not lift his head

or make the least sign of having heard. Perhaps in every nature there are some elements unsuspected until it is stirred to the very depths; and his had never been so deeply stirred before. Cosmo for his part was in no mood or state to argue. The desperate hurry of the last hour had left him spent and trembling; even the thrill of relief with which he had realised that Edmund was safe for the present had shaken him and robbed him of the little strength he had left. He cared indeed little for that. It was deliverance and joy unspeakable, though it had turned him weak and dizzy. The doubt and difficulty, and even the shame of the actual facts, were nothing compared to the ghastly fear that had just vanished,—the fear of an endless, hopeless remorse. Down at Pennithorne two hours ago Edmund's very existence had seemed a disgrace from which there could be no escape; but now his presence, alive and well, was in itself a thing for which to be eternally thankful. As for Cosmo's physical sensations at the moment, so far as he could think at all he felt that to break down might be the best way to regain a hold over Edmund, in this new bitter mood of his.

He laid his hand on Edmund's shoulder once more, and let it rest there rather heavily. "Will you make room for me on that seat of yours?" he said, smiling, though somewhat faintly.

Instinctively Edmund moved, so as to make room on the rocky ledge beside him; at the same moment he glanced up surprised, and took his first real look into the other's face. "What's the matter?" he asked hurriedly. "Here, sit down; you've no business here."

"Nothing is the matter. Only I have come a long way in a hurry, and I am—rather done up. I won't faint

if I can help it!" He half laughed as he spoke, in answer to the anxious haste with which Edmund had drawn him down, and thrown a supporting arm round him. Then he leaned his head against his brother's shoulder, closing his eyes to shut out the whirling, dizzying snow, and for a moment had to devote all his energies to keeping his word. But shortly he was aware that Edmund was chafing his hands and questioning him in the half savage tones of desperate anxiety, and he roused himself to understand and to answer. "It's—all right! It's the first time I have been so far since the fire, that's all. I shall be all right in a minute."

"It is madness for you to have come here at all,—all this way, in such weather! What possessed you to think of coming after me?"

"You know!" Cosmo turned and raised himself a little on the arm that still held him, and looked full in his brother's eyes. "And I am more than content, now I have found you."

"It was a pity you did," said Edmund, with a little dreary laugh. "I had not quite screwed my courage to the sticking-place, but I dare say I should have managed it before long. And it would have been the best way out of the mess, for all of us."

Cosmo did not answer, unless by the shudder that Edmund could feel run through him. His hand moved to his brother's, tightening on it with a significant imperious clasp that spoke as plainly as words. "I will not let you go," it said. "We love each other, and by that I have a right over you. You shall not go."

"I am as foolish as you, to let you sit here," said Edmund suddenly after a moment. "Can you come on now? You will be frozen unless you keep moving, and I can at least give you a good strong prop to lean upon."

He rose, brushing off the snow that

had fallen thickly on them both. After a moment Cosmo rose too, feeling that the kindest thing he could do for Edmund was to lean hard on his support and let him have his way.

"Now," said Edmund, with a sort of determined briskness, "you know this country better than I do. What's the nearest house we can make for?"

"Herne's Edge. There may be others a trifle nearer as the crow flies, but for us who are not crows the Edge will be easiest reached."

"So be it, then. How far should you call it?"

"I hardly know; between three and four miles."

"So much as that! Will you ever be able to do it?"

"Of course! At any rate it is but to try, and to keep on trying."

"It is—this way, isn't it, between those hills on the sky-line?" Edmund's voice faltered a little and he glanced anxiously at Cosmo as he spoke. He was by no means clear even as to general direction in this thick atmosphere, and ways there were none over the trackless, snow-clad moor. If Cosmo was equally uncertain, where might they not find themselves? And the snow was coming down now so thickly that the night was drawing on before its time.

"So long as we can see the sky-line I know the way well enough," said Cosmo quietly. "It would be a good thing if we could get off the moor before we lose sight of everything a yard further than our noses; but I doubt we shall not manage it. The road is nearest in that direction, and we had better make for it, though it isn't quite in a bee-line for home."

"I grudge you a step out of your way, but if it can't be helped, it can't!"

They were moving on as fast as the inequality of the ground would permit, Edmund's whole thought and

attention given to helping and sparing his companion as much as possible. And now they fell silent, not only because both felt that Cosmo had better not waste his strength in talking, but because there was so much in their minds for which words were too clumsy. What Cosmo was thinking of let those say who have known the resurrection of buried love, when the heart that has been trying to harden itself suddenly flings all just resentment into the empty tomb, and buries it for ever; when other loves and hopes, that were not dead but had seemed cold and withered, come smiling back with their lost sister, and all the world is spring again. How foolish he had been! how natural it seemed now to bear all things and hope all things, and be sure that Love and Right would conquer in the end; while as yet he was in no mood to look before and after, or question the how and the where of their victory. Edmund's thoughts were simpler still, and less to be defined,—love and shame and gratitude contending, and the keen sense of present peril blotting out all difficulties that the future might have in store. It was happiness, life, after the death of blank despair, to know that he had been followed for love's sake into this wilderness of his humiliation; and yet in another sense he would have given much to have been alone, and not to have been haunted by the thought of what might well happen if they missed their way, and by the memory of that old man whose fate, an hour ago, he had envied and desired. And through it all was a sort of warmth of triumphant exultation. They two were alone together out of all the world, the fate of the one whom all loved bound up with that of him who was only a burden and a shame. "They would not trust me with him if they knew," he thought. "But Fate has

done that for them; and now we will live or die together."

Half an hour of battling with snow and wind may sometimes seem an endless space of time. It seemed longer to Edmund than to Cosmo, though Cosmo felt as though he had been struggling on through the deepening twilight ever since he could remember. For a long while they had not spoken, but at last Edmund said abruptly: "We ought to have reached the road by this time, surely! Can you tell at all if we are still in the right direction?"

"I have lost sight of my landmarks for some little time, but I feel as though the road was just ahead, and straight before us," answered Cosmo; and then there was silence again for a quarter of an hour or so.

"I am afraid we have missed the road."

"It runs east and west as straight as a line for more than two miles. We can hardly fail to hit it somewhere if we keep going."

"Unless,—I daren't ask you how you are getting on."

"I begin to understand those Alpine explorers who entreat their friends to let them lie down and go to sleep. But I am not quite come to that yet."

There was silence again for a little while, and then Cosmo spoke, almost in a whisper. "I think I must stop for a moment. No; I won't ask to lie down and sleep, but you must give me a minute's breathing-space."

Edmund's arm had been round his shoulder for some time past; now it tightened its clasp, and they stood still, hearkening to the little hissing whisper of the snow as it fell all round them.

"I think I could keep on for a good while yet if I knew we were going right," said Cosmo at last. "But the feeling that we may be

going all the while further away from home and help takes all the pith out of me."

Edmund set his teeth and looked round, as if he would force his eyes to pierce the gloom and find their way. It was quite dark now, save for a faint light from the snow that just showed them each other and a yard or two of the trackless waste in which they stood. Faint as the light was, it was even more deceptive, for everywhere the ground seemed to rise round them like a cup, and had done so as they moved on for the last half hour over the low undulations of the moor.

"Is there any chance of our being heard if I were to shout?" asked Edmund at last.

"If we are near the road; there are houses scattered along it every half mile or so," answered Cosmo, in a tone that he would not suffer to be despairing but could not make hopeful; and Edmund raised his voice and shouted at its utmost stretch.

"I have a dog-whistle on my chain; that might carry further," suggested his brother, and fumbling at the swivel with numbed aching fingers, at last got it free.

Three times the shrill appeal rang out over those waste spaces. Then they both listened, wondering whether, if they had been driving along the road that night and had heard the distant echo of a whistle sounding faintly through the snow and the wind, they would have thought it worth while to stop and investigate the cause,—and thought not, and would not say so to each other.

"I heard a dog bark," said Edmund in a breathless undertone; and Cosmo, who had fancied he heard it too, but was not sure enough to say so, pressed his shoulder and did not speak.

Again Edmund whistled, and the bark sounded again, nearer this time.

They waited, straining their eyes to see the gleam of a lantern, or the figure of a man struggling towards them. They saw neither, only after a very short time a small dark object bounding over the snow. A moment more, and it rushed up to them, springing upon Cosmo with a joyful bark and bespattering him with snow.

"I believe the dog is alone," cried Edmund, in bitter disappointment.

"Who cares!" answered Cosmo almost gaily, with difficulty repressing the wild caresses. "Don't you see it's old Moloch? And he's worth more than a man and horse any day! Why, my dog, some one has been making a St. Bernard rescue-party of you and tied a scent-bottle round your neck!"

"A bottle—quiet, Moloch, let me get it off! Is there brandy in it by good luck? Yes! Now you drink that, every drop. But what other good his coming is to do us I don't know."

"Tie your handkerchief to his collar so that he mayn't leave us behind, and you'll soon see. He knows the way home well enough. But I wish I knew how he tracked us here."

They were moving on now with renewed hope and vigour, Moloch tugging at his leash as if he meant to tow them home to Herne's Edge by his unaided exertions. Still they had no energy to spare for talking, though after a moment Cosmo's wonder found words. "Some one must have let him loose, and he has gone all the way down to Pennithorne and followed me on. How did anybody up at home know of any reason for letting him loose? He might have got out by accident, but then—give me that scent-bottle again, Edmund." It was too dark to see it plainly, but his fingers felt it over with a recognising touch, and he started. "That's manifestly impossible," he said in an argumentative

tone, rather to himself than to Edmund. "She wasn't at Pennithorne, and how could she be at the Edge? We are all bewitched to-night, that's all?" But he put the tiny flask into his own pocket instead of returning it; and Edmund felt the new spring with which he set himself to face the weary way that they had yet to travel.

"There's one thing I've got to say," said Edmund, as they reached the wall that for them just now meant the boundary of the world of living men, and leaned against it a moment before Cosmo could find strength to climb over it into the road beyond.

"What is that?"

"I come back to life and the world on my own terms,—which are my father's. I shall say to him 'I am no more worthy to be called thy son' without expecting or wishing that he should answer according to precedent. If you call me brother, that is enough. I have no place at Herne's Edge, no claim on the estate, now or in the future."

Cosmo had thought he knew every tone of Edmund's voice, but this was new to him. "We need not discuss the matter now at any rate," he said, eking out the words with a pressure of the shoulder on which he leaned.

"Neither now nor ever! And—one thing more. I gave you to understand just now that I had not the courage or the resolution to make away with myself, and God knows I need not make myself out a poorer creature than I am. I meant to do it; I should have done it before you came; but——"

"Well——" said Cosmo with a shudder, as he paused.

"I hardly know how to say it. It was Geoffrey Pierce's voice that stopped me, and yet I did not even *think* I heard it. Only I remembered it, so vividly that it seemed as though he were speaking close beside me.

"I have always stood by you, and I always will," he said. "If you give up the game you are false to me." I don't know whether I ever heard him say that; but I am as sure that he was thinking it just then as that I stand here alive who would be dead but for him—and you. Look there! I see a light moving yonder, down the road."

CHAPTER XXII.

"GONE to Herne's Edge?" echoed Mrs. Heron sharply. "Impossible! I mean,—I did not expect Mr. Edmund Heron to-day. Did they take the pony-carriage?"

"No, ma'am," answered the man, and hesitated as if there were more behind.

"Mr. Cosmo would never be so mad as to think of walking so far! What time was it when they left?"

"Mr. Cosmo,—about four o'clock. I did not see Mr. Edmund go, but I think it was some little time before."

"They were not together, then? Which way did they go?"

"I don't know about Mr. Edmund; but to tell the truth I watched Mr. Cosmo from the window up stairs, and he turned up by Goodwin's Farm."

"Across the moors!" Mrs. Heron turned away and began to pace the hall, heedless of the man's eyes fixed upon her in respectful scrutiny, or of the wide startled looks from those dark eyes of Althea's, as the girl stood in her thick travelling-wraps beside the fire, suddenly startled out of the not unpleasant embarrassment of this home-coming.

But after a moment Althea went to her, moved by the contagion of a fear she could not understand. "What is it?" she asked, laying a hand upon the elder woman's arm. "What are you afraid of?"

"I cannot tell you! So late and

dark as it is, is that not enough? How are they to find their way? I would give all I am worth to know they were both safe at the Edge. I would give half I am worth simply to be there myself and know the truth."

"Could we not go there, at once, you and I?"

There was such intensity in Mrs. Heron's half-whispered words that it never occurred to her hearer to question their reason. There seemed nothing to do but to yield to her eagerness, even to share it. But the practical suggestion restored her a little to calmness. "It is dark already," she said. "And Simpson will say the horses cannot possibly do it after all that distance this afternoon."

"There is the pony-carriage," suggested Althea, hardly knowing what were the possibilities of the case. But Mrs. Heron shook her head, and turning away, began to pace the hall again, then went to the door and opened it and looked out into the night. "I cannot bear it!" she went on, after a moment or two, coming back. "It cannot be as I fear, but I shall die unless I know soon that it is not. I will *make* Simpson take me in the pony-carriage; but not you, my child, after your long journey."

"Please let me! I am not tired. Please let me come."

At the urgency of her tone Mrs. Heron turned suddenly and looked her in the face; then caught her by the wrist, and spoke in a hurried undertone. "Are you so afraid too? You know Edmund as well as I do. Tell me—you may whisper it—what are you afraid of?"

"Not what you are thinking; oh, never that! I was always hard upon Edmund, but I always knew he loved Cosmo."

Mrs. Heron looked at her keenly, and took another turn up and down the hall. Some people cannot bear to be contradicted, even when their own thought is a horrible fear. "If your mind is so easy you had better stay quietly at home," she said coldly at last.

"But my mind is not easy. The world outside seems so big and so strange to-night, it frightens me. If we were only outside in it with them I should not be so much afraid, even if we could do nothing more. Let us go!"

Mr. Heron was sitting alone beside the library-fire, with one foot, the ankle of which was bandaged, resting on a stool before him. He was looking into the blazing caverns, and thinking so deeply that even the unwonted sounds of steps upon the pavement outside hardly roused him from his reverie. When the door opened, admitting Mrs. Heron and Althea, it seemed as though his thoughts had taken bodily shape; for it was of those two he had been thinking, his son's wife and his own.

His keen strong features had a softer look than usual as he rose in his surprise to greet them; but Mrs. Heron did not give herself time to notice it, or the slight exclamation of pain with which he sat down, and restored the foot to its former position. One look she cast round the room, then cried hastily, "Have they come yet?"

"Who?"

"Cosmo—and Edmund!"

"Are you dreaming? Cosmo is with you, and Edmund—in London, I suppose."

Mrs. Heron sat down, letting her hands fall at her sides with an unconsciously tragic gesture. She did not seem concerned to explain herself, and it was left to Althea to say what

they thought and feared, while the Squire stared at her as if he thought she too was dreaming. But the mere fact of their presence there, at such an hour and on such a night, proved to him that their anxiety at any rate was real enough.

"Across the moors?" he questioned sharply, beginning at last to realise the story. "And what time did he leave Pennithorne? Four o'clock? They might have been here hours ago!" He started to his feet, and sat down again, biting his lip and frowning desperately. "And I like a fool must twist my ankle this morning till I can't stand upon it! They ought to have been here an hour since; unless they had lost their way,—or——"

Mrs. Heron came hastily forward. "I am going! I can look for them," she said. "I went that way across the moors once."

"Sit down, Janet! This is not woman's work; we should have to send men out to look for you next. If they don't come soon I will have every man out that can do any good; but you could do nothing."

She sat down again silently. Even at that moment she remembered that it was twenty years since he had called her Janet, or spoken to her with the natural authority of a husband instead of the punctilious observance due to a stranger.

Mr. Heron had perhaps been influenced by his lifelong habit of opposing his wife's suggestion, or had not expected her to yield so readily. He began to calculate times and distances, and to prove conclusively that after all the young men could not have arrived much sooner. Neither took much heed of Althea, who listened with her heart in her eyes, and, when Mr. Heron had talked himself silent without response, stole softly out into the fire-lit hall.

There she stood, pressing her fore-

head against the window-pane and looking out into the night, noting how now and then a snow-flake flitted by near enough to the window to gleam white against the blackness beyond, and listening to the sigh of the wind. Listening intently she stood, though the sound she longed for she did not hope to hear as yet. Just then a dog barked in the courtyard to the right of the house answering a distant bark from the farmhouse below in the valley. "Is that Moloch? Will they take him with them?" she asked herself. The short bark was still heard at intervals, as if the dog felt something unusual in the air. Then Althea began to think of the stories she had heard from Moloch's master of his surpassing intelligence, and to wonder whether it was only her own ignorance that made her think that he might be of some use, and made her long with so much impatience to be doing something.

"It can do no harm, at all events," she said at last as if reasoning with herself. "At least he can only go down to Pennithorne; and Mrs. Heron to-night would welcome a toad or a snake that was his."

Then another thought came to Althea, that she more than suspected was silly, and that therefore she would tell to no one, but did not abandon. In her pocket was the scent-flask that Cosmo had given her, almost his only present except the ring that had never seemed really her own. To get it filled with brandy by the old house-keeper, with whom she had made friends long before, was the work of a few moments; the next she was out in the courtyard alone with Moloch, fastening the little bottle to his collar and telling him what he was to do. She could almost have believed him a kind of goblin, who understood every word she spoke; and indeed there was something preoccupied about his friend-

ly greeting of her, as though he knew very well that there was important business toward. As soon as she unfastened his chain he made one bound as if to test his freedom, and then galloped steadily forward into the snow and the darkness, as if he had had but one desire for many hours past and now saw his way to gratifying it. Then Althea, feeling a little ashamed of herself, slipped back into the library, to watch once more that tense unconfessed anxiety that seemed to make her own so much harder to bear.

After about three quarters of an hour more of fitful talk and watchful silence Mr. Heron rang the bell, and gave his orders in brisk short sentences that would not admit any cause for fear; while his wife looked as though his doing what she had so longed for him to do had in itself confirmed her worst terrors.

The little bustle of the men's start died away, and once more the old house was deadly still,—as still as the occupants of the library who spoke no word and hardly moved a finger. Althea was watching the other two, suffering for and with them; but for her own part she was not despairing, only anxious. Having despaired once, not long ago, and found her fears not realised, her courageous young spirit declined to be depressed again by anything short of absolute certainty. And she was sure that Mr. Heron was not despondent, though listening in keen suspense and chafing against his own helplessness. But it would have been less trying for the others if his nature had not been to watch and to chafe in such absolute silence. As for Mrs. Heron, the way in which she was taking this was quite contrary to her nature,—at least to any manifestation of it that Althea had ever seen. Whether she was afraid of her husband, or trying to emulate his stoicism,

or merely frozen into despair, there was nothing at first to show; but Althea perceived presently that her mood was above and beyond any of the three.

Something startled them out of their quiescence presently,—a mere false alarm, a slamming of a door or gate for which the wind alone was responsible. Then Mrs. Heron, having risen and gone to the window, only to look out upon blank darkness and silence, came back with all her forced calm broken down. "Richard!" she cried sharply, holding out her hands to him imploringly, as she stood in the middle of the floor. "On your honour, do you think we shall ever see them again alive?"

"On my honour, yes,—please God!" he answered solemnly. "After all, they are both men and strong ones, and one of them at least knows these moors as well as the house he was born in."

Did the Squire too remember that he heard his own name from his wife's lips for the first time for nearly twenty years? Did the interchange shake and move him as for the moment it had moved her? If so, he did not show it. He motioned to her in his stately way to take the chair which he could not rise to give her; but she ignored the gesture and only moved a little nearer, standing before him as before a judge.

"I have a confession to make," she said. "I make it now, when perhaps the worst has happened already, because I never in my life spoke the truth till circumstances compelled me,—and they usually compel too late. No, child, you need not go. The more that hear me the better; the whole world might hear me, if only by shaming myself I might hope to bring them back." Mr. Heron drew in his lips and looked at her thoughtfully. Plainly he did not

think, as Althea did, that anxiety was turning her brain, nor was he altogether surprised. "I spoke of them," she went on, "but you and I know which of the two we meant, and how much we care or have cared for the other. Your conscience may be clear in this matter; but as for mine,—I am his mother, and I never loved him—no, not long ago, when he had done nothing to forfeit my love." Her eyes were fixed upon her husband's face, and the sight of its impassive, judicial gravity seemed to sting her pride and bring a new note into her voice. "And it was your fault; yours, who sit there and judge me. You brought me here, a young girl; you never asked if I had been brought up to think as you thought, to feel as you felt. Have I ever forgotten your look when first you found out that I had said what was not literally true,—a white lie they called it at school, and what was I but an ignorant schoolgirl? Was that a fault that was never to be forgiven? You never forgave it, at any rate, and I—you might have made me repent, but you only stirred me up to show that all the world was the same, that at least I could get my own way by the means that you so despised. It was second nature to me, but I might have changed myself for your sake if you had helped me. Then Edmund was born, and as soon as he could speak he told a lie. All children do it, except just one here and there; but you looked at me again as though you loathed me, and I knew that you were saying to yourself, 'He gets this from her!' Well, you know how he grew up! All his life you have been trying to thrust him upon me, trying to make me responsible for him; and I hated him; he was my weakness, my sin, if you like to call it so, come to life and standing for ever between you and me. And

Cosmo, whom I loved, who had no faults but those we could both love him the better for,—I saw in your eyes each time you looked at him that you felt him all yours, that you were thanking God that there was nothing of his mother in him."

How strange it seemed to hear this woman, with all her polite conventionalities and small insincerities, speaking out the truth at last. Her very face seemed changed, its stately, commonplace, middle-aged beauty at once marred and transfigured by emotion, suppliant and defiant at the same time, as though something within her pleaded and entreated, and had to be sternly restrained.

"I think you wronged me, and yourself," said Mr. Heron, gravely and quietly, as she paused. "I was very hard in those days: I have been too unyielding all my life; but I think I was never so hard as that."

"But you were! And at last I could bear it no longer! I thought if we lived apart and I did not see your constant disapproval, I should not care so much; and perhaps I could win Cosmo over to my side. If I could have done that I should have been happy. But Cosmo's eyes always looked me through, like yours; and that day he left me as a little child, I knew he would never be mine again. But I said to myself that you were mistaken if you expected that I would take Edmund instead, and both of us sit down together in our shame. There are many chances in life, and I thought I would wait till one of them came round to me." She stopped a moment, as if listening for some sound outside, then went on more passionately, "And this, I suppose, is the chance I was waiting for! We have been squabbling over them all our lives and we have lost them both,—the one we loved with the one whom we both wanted to cast off. Your conscience

may be clear,—that is your own business—but mine is not.” Again Mrs. Heron paused, and wringing her hands together flung them apart with an almost tragic gesture. “Cosmo is yours,” she went on, “and Edmund is mine, with all his faults and his disgrace,—mine with the sin that I gave him, and the sin that you hated in him and in me. If I had owned it years ago everything would have been different. I might have had more patience with him than ever you had. God knows I had reason to be patient.”

She checked herself, and there was silence for a moment or two, while Mr. Heron turned his keen glance from her face to the dying fire. “Janet,” he said gently, “if you had but said all this years ago!”

“I taunt myself with that often enough to-night; you need not take up the word,” she answered, briefly and bitterly.

Perhaps his speech had not been meant quite as she took it, but he did not hasten to undeceive her. They were not boy and girl whose hearts run together like two water-drops at the first hint of possible reconciliation, but man and woman chilled by the frost of years of parting, and full moreover of another almost all absorbing thought.

Mrs. Heron sat down again, as though the strength of passion had left her, covering her face with her hands: the Squire looked at her once more, but with an inward look, as if he were sending back his memory over all the years to their parting long ago; and neither spoke.

Althea had softly left the room, unnoticed by either at the first gentler tone in her father-in-law's voice. Now was surely the one moment in their lives when they might draw closer to each other, and at least they should have what op-

portunity she could give them. For a moment, as she listened to Mrs. Heron's confession, she had almost forgotten their mutual fear and anxiety; and now as she paused and looked round the firelit hall a sudden causeless exhilaration raised her above all fear. She had heard nothing, she had seen nothing, but an irresistible impulse made her go straight to the door and fling it wide open, as though the waiting were over and nothing more to be done but let the returning wanderers in.

In the room she had just left Mrs. Heron suddenly lifted her head, as if listening to a whisper of hope that came from she knew not where. “Richard!” she said. “If they come home safe,—if God is so merciful to us as that—I make myself responsible for Edmund and all his family from this time forward. He shall be mine, and what I have shall be his; and I will care for him as much as I can. I promise it, to God and to you!”

Althea stood beside the open door and from behind her the red glow streamed out into the night. Some one had lit a large lamp and set it in an upper window, from whence it cast a strange effect of light across the snowy space of terrace and garden, making the walls on either side look huge and dark, outlined in white against the black night sky.

There were lights down by the gate, blurred by the thick falling flakes and footsteps and voices in the garden. And coming up the steps, coming out of the darkness and the snow into the welcoming light, were the two who had been very near to seeing the lights of home no more.

Very like the two faces seemed, both deadly pale, Edmund's almost as white and weary as Cosmo's, and both irradiated with something that

triumphed over weariness. Edmund's arm was still round his brother. Cosmo's instinct had told him, when help met them not far from their own gate, that to come before their father as they had come all that weary way from the moor was worth more to Edmund than present relief from the task to which he had given himself. And now, as his feet touched the threshold of his home for the first time in nearly ten years, the brothers looked at each other with a strange fine smile, of which not even Althea could guess all the meaning; while now it was Cosmo, with his hand on the other's shoulder, who was drawing him forward into the light.

At that moment, after one glance had shown her all that it takes far longer to tell of, Althea bethought herself of those two in the library, whose suspense had been even more painful than her own. In an instant she was at the library-door. "They have come!" she said. Then a sudden access of shyness seized her. Neither Cosmo nor his brother knew that she was here; neither Mr. nor Mrs. Heron were likely to remember her existence or wish for her presence during the speaking of such words as would have to be spoken now. Like a scared bird she darted along the end of the hall under the curtain that screened the door of the staircase, and only paused when, safely out of hearing and sight, she might fling herself on the window-seat of the second landing, and listen to the throbbing of her own heart, and wonder what her own share was to be in the general gladness.

She might well wonder too what was going on down stairs; but that strange meeting was a very brief one, and no striking scene after all, except to those who could see more than met the eye. In the excitement of the moment Mr. Heron had dragged him-

self as far as the library-door, and there his wife came hurriedly to offer her help, which he accepted, as it seemed, without thinking of it, so that they stood in the hall before their sons close together, arm locked in arm, as loving husband and wife often stand, but as neither of those sons had ever seen them stand before.

It was Edmund who found his voice first, while Cosmo leaned against his shoulder, dazed with the warmth and light. "I had, and have, something to say to you," he said, looking full at his father. "But you would not have seen me here, to-night, or ever, if it had not been for Cosmo."

"Or me, if it had not been for Edmund," said Cosmo emphatically. "I could never have got home if he had not been with me."

The Squire looked from Cosmo to Edmund and back again, with eyes intensely keen beneath his bent brows. Perhaps he read something in both faces that had not been there before, but all he said was: "You are both done up. You had better go to bed, and say what there is to be said in the morning."

Cosmo smiled. The laconic speech, a little tremulous with past emotion, suited him much better than anything more effusive. Still keeping his hold of Edmund's shoulder he laid his other hand upon his mother's arm as she stood mute and motionless, and drew the four a little nearer together. "Father," he said, "you must give Edmund your hand to-night. I say so, who have been more bitter, more jealous for the family honour, than yourself. Mother, have you not a kiss for us both?"

Again Mr. Heron's eyes seemed to read them both through and through; and Edmund's, full of sorrow and shame, yet met his as they had never done before. With a certain solemnity Mr. Heron held out his hand and

touched his eldest son's for the first time since they had parted nearly ten years before. His wife, with a little gesture as though giving up some inward struggle, yielded to Cosmo's pleading touch, and drawing nearer kissed them both,—and it was Edmund's lips that hers touched first.

Only one moment, but it blotted out some of the hand-writing of years. And then,—it was over. Others were coming into the room,—the searchers, eager to tell what they had done and take credit for having found what was no longer in danger of being lost; the old housekeeper ready to point out the rooms where fires were blazing in welcome, and to recommend hot drinks and warm beds; and all the household, in silent offer of service which they knew was superfluous but which testified to their excitement and congratulation.

Edmund seemed to have no eyes or thoughts but for Cosmo; and Cosmo yielded himself passively to their will for the moment, chiefly thinking of what would make this trying experience easier for Edmund. Neither had had time to wonder yet how their mother came to be there, or what was the meaning of that new look on her proud, handsome face.

Althea shrank behind the curtain in the deep recess of the window, and dared not even look out as a little procession passed with some stir and confusion up the stairs. But she heard Cosmo's voice and it brought the tears to her eyes, so weary and yet so satisfied it sounded. It was good to know that he felt like that, and yet—was it only because he had brought Edmund home, and was his wife quite forgotten?

As every one else left the hall Mrs. Heron stood motionless, looking after her sons with hungry eyes, but making no movement to follow them.

Had she lost all or gained all? She hardly knew, or whether this new feeling in her heart was desolation or peace. At that moment there came a touch on her arm; looking round she saw her husband, with a grave sweet smile in his deep-set eyes. "You helped me out, Janet," he said; "you must be good enough to help me back again, I think. And have not you and I something more to say to one another?" The library-door closed after them, and what was said behind it no one knows.

Some people think that Mr. Heron and his wife were never reconciled; at least, say they, there was never anything to show for it. Certainly they never lived together; but there may have been other reasons for that than incompatibility of temper. There was not room enough at Herne's Edge for three households, and the Edmund Herons, with four children and their nurse and governess, went some way towards filling even those big rooms at Pennithorne. Certainly also they never used any endearing epithets towards one another in public; but then one could not imagine Mr. Heron ever doing that in any circumstances. Mrs. Heron's few intimate friends at any rate gathered an impression that all was right at last between her and her husband, although she never said a word on the subject to any of them,—chiefly on account of that new expression that never altogether left her face, and a new gentleness and serenity that crept into her manner, mellowing it into an old age more attractive and lovable than ever her youth had been. The charge that she had taken upon herself could not have been a very slight one; but as she never consulted any one but her husband as to how to bear her burden, and did very often consult him, and as she seemed on the whole a far from unhappy woman, it may be supposed

that she had at least a part of what she had missed for so many years,—friendship, kindliness, and a certain amount of respect.

But to return to that eventful night at Herne's Edge. When her ears had convinced her that the coast was clear, Althea stole down stairs again, remembering that it was her duty to be at hand when Mrs. Heron should recall her existence and inquire for her.

At first sight she fancied that the hall was empty, as she had expected to find it, but in a moment there ran to greet her, from the rug before the fire, a very important personage indeed.

"Moloch," she whispered, sitting down on the stool beside the hearth and letting the good dog put his paws upon her knee. "Did you find them? Did you and I have our little share that no one knows of but ourselves?" He looked at her with lurid eyes full of sullen faithfulness; and the very motions of his long thin tail, and the curves of his back as he pressed up against her hand, expressed a kind of modest pride. "We did it," he was evidently saying, "but we do not talk about it. No one else loves him so well." So at least Althea understood him, as she laid her soft flushed cheek against the comely hideousness of his massive head, and talked loving nonsense to him, shedding a few tears by way of relief after all the excitements of the evening. The little bottle that she had tied to his collar was gone. Had he lost it in the snow, she wondered, or had it come to the hands for which it was meant?

Thanks to conversation with Moloch she failed to hear a soft slow step that came wearily down the stairs and paused beneath the curtain. Presently it came somewhat more swiftly across the room, and some one knelt down

beside her, laying one hand upon Moloch's sleek neck and the other upon her wrist.

"Moloch has many excellent qualities," said a voice that she had every reason to expect to hear and that yet thrilled her from head to foot. "But do you love him for himself alone?" Weariness had made his speech as soft and slow as his step, but could not quench in it the irrepressible gladness that must needs play with its own delight.

"I thought you had gone to bed; you ought!" she said, shirking the question, and turning to look into his face, which showed clear in the firelight while the shadow hid her own.

"Very likely! But are none of those sweet words and kisses for Moloch's master? Have not you and he had a confabulation before this evening? This is your property, isn't it, that he brought to me—from you?" Althea did not need to look at the tiny flask that he laid in her lap; her fingers recognised it, as his had done in very different circumstances. "I took it as a message from you," he went on. "It helped in more ways than one to bring me home. And then I fancied I saw, though I was not in a state to be very sure of anything, a face at the door that I missed afterwards. Do you wonder that I did not find it possible to go quietly to bed?"

"It would have been much better for you."

"Dearest!"—his voice grew suddenly serious—"I have to ask you to forgive me. I was a great fool when we parted, so confident that I was right and you were wrong; and it was you who were right all the while."

"It was not your fault. You couldn't have helped blaming me, unless I had told you what I had promised not to tell."

"And you were true to your promise, of course, while I was shutting

my eyes and giving myself airs of superiority. I wonder which of us two I hurt the most? You were revenged afterwards, if you had but known it."

"How?" asked Althea half abstractedly. She was thinking, "I am his wife after all! What does it matter for whom he cared first? I can make him love me best before all is done." And then his eyes met hers and she suddenly forgot Emily's existence; and she never in that particular sense remembered it again.

"How?" said Cosmo. "When I began to understand, I was not only sulky, I was ashamed and afraid to speak; afraid that I had lost what I had never deserved to have, and was just beginning to rate at its true value. Believe me, I was very miserable."

"Are you miserable now?"

"No; only jealous of Moloch. Go down, good dog, my head has even a better right there than yours."

When Mrs. Heron came out of the library a little while afterwards she found Cosmo lying on the bearskin in front of the fire, with his head in his wife's lap, too happy and too comfortable to move, as he explained in answer to her remonstrances. She accepted the situation as she might not have done a few hours before. "I will send up your things from Pennithorne, my dear," she said, laying her hand upon Althea's shoulder with a smile and a stifled sigh. "Stay where your right place is, and be as happy as you look now. Can you tell me where Edmund is, Cosmo? I want to speak to him before I go."

"Up-stairs, in my room," he answered, and raised himself a little on his elbow to look into his mother's face. He had meant to beg her not to be hard on Edmund at least to-night, but when he read what was written there he went contentedly back to his former attitude without more words.

And she, passing out beneath the curtain, paused a moment to look back upon that picture on the hearth, to feel all that it was and all that it meant. They had forgotten her already in each other; the warm fire-light glowed round them and the cold wind sighed without. She saw them in the light of what she herself had missed, their feet touching the shores of that Promised Land which she too had seen in her day, but whose sunshiny ways her feet had never trodden. "We are all alike!" she said, and sighed with a kind of pitying envy, as looking on a bliss that was doomed to fade.

But she lingered yet a moment, with the heavy folds of the curtain in her hand, and a word or two of their murmured talk came to her where she stood. It was not of themselves they were speaking, even in this sweet renewal of young love. "Edmund," "Margaret," and other names less familiar, came to her ears, in tones tender and anxious.

"Dear children!" thought Mrs. Heron, with a touch of patronage. "They need not trouble themselves; I will arrange all that." Then in a softer mood: "No, we are not all alike after all! God keep them!" said she, and let the curtain fall.